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The English Works of Wyclif

Hitherto Unprinted.

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Rō p.

þo þat mai amende þis ȝe done
not. for oȝur poule oȝur. he is
not donly worpi. þe þat doþe
þuel yngis. but also he þat
consentþ to þe doer. for soþe
alle þo consente. þat done not
he þo we to amende oȝur de
fawtis. And þfore no man may
putt an oȝur grounde biȝis þat
þat is putt. þe whiche is cste
ihū. Capitulu. iij.

Spelesse of o yngre. j.
þay þou heye. þat þe
þeue þou not. all þou
for ete not lytly þe matiall
oweide wþ his pustenances.
and þat j. desye heȝthi þat it we
tunyd aȝen in to his kynde
place. whey god hym ouȝt had
putt it. for whan tist was i þe
hondis of his emmyes. whey to

The English Works

of

Wyclif

Hitherto Unprinted.

EDITED BY

F. D. MATTHEW.

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LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS.

Most of the MSS. from which this volume is taken have been used by Mr. Arnold for his *Select English Works of Wyclif*, and I have thought it best to keep to the distinguishing letters assigned by him in his lists (I. xvii. and III. xiii.).

A. Bodleian, 788.

I have not seen this MS., which Mr. Arnold describes as “a small thick folio on good but thin parchment, sparingly ornamented with blue and red flourishes and head-letters.” He assigns it to the last decade of the fourteenth century. He has printed, I believe, all its contents except the one short tract which it has furnished to this volume, No. XXV.

Q. New College, Oxford, 95.

This MS. consists of 148 leaves of vellum, $4\frac{1}{2} \times 7$, written in a hand of the fifteenth century. It has a subscription, “Johannes Wy——,” and contains only sermons and tracts by Wyclif. All except that here given (No. XXIV.) were printed by Mr. Arnold.

X. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 290.

A small folio on vellum of the fourteenth or early fifteenth century. It is well and clearly written, but by a careless scribe, who evidently thought little of the meaning of the words he copied. The text of tracts I. to XX. is founded on this MS.

AA. Trinity College, Dublin, C. III. 12.

A MS. on vellum, about 8×6 , 219 leaves. It seems to be a copy from the same original as X., but is imperfect. The handwriting is irregular; sometimes formal, and at others straggling, as if the writer were hurried or weary. In contrast to X. the copyist seems to have been interested in his work, and I suspect him of occasionally strengthening expressions to relieve his own mind. (See, for example, the various readings in the tract on Curates, from chap. xv. onwards, p. 132.) From leaf 188 a new handwriting begins, and it is probable that the two halves of the volume owe their connexion only to a similarity of subject and the favour of the printer. (See Shirley's Catalogue, xii.) It is from the second half that the tract on Dominion (our No. XXI.) is taken.

CC. Trinity College, Dublin, C. V. 6.

A MS. on vellum, about $6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, in a neat handwriting of the first part of the fifteenth century. It contains some tracts which are not Wyclif's, but has also several which are certainly his. Some of these are in Mr. Arnold's third volume, and it has furnished us with our Nos. XXII., XXIII.

LL. Lambeth, 551.

A MS. on vellum of 59 leaves, $5\frac{3}{4} \times 4$ inches, written without ornament, but clearly and carefully. Dr. Todd classed it in his catalogue of the Lambeth Library as of the fourteenth century, but the best opinions I could obtain assign it to the middle of the fifteenth. The facsimile which serves as frontispiece will give judges an opportunity of deciding for themselves.

On the fly-leaf is written: "I take this to bee on of the scoles of Raynolde pecocke who wrote in K Henry the 6 tyme abute an^o 1457." Below is: "Jon wicklyfe was in the beginning of Richard ye seconds tyme an^o 1377;" and below this again, in the hand of Dr. James, is: "this booke is Wickelyfes and is called *De quæstionibus variis contra clerum*." The volume contains nothing beyond the tract printed here, No. XXVI.

MM. Ashburnham XXVII.

A MS. on vellum, about $6\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$, written legibly, but without any attempt at adornment, in a charter hand of the fifteenth century. The copyist has gone through his work and corrected it. The MS. contains only three English tracts, one of which, our No. XXIII., is also in CC. The other two (our Nos. XXVII., XXVIII.) are printed from this, the only known copy of them. The rest of the volume is occupied with Latin works, from which I have given some quotations in the Notes.

SS. Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, Δ , 4, 12.

I have used this MS. only for the collation of Tract No. XX., and unfortunately failed to notice that it had been entered in Mr. Arnold's list as N. He describes it in his Introduction to the first volume, pp. xiv. and xx.

Besides these MSS., which have furnished my text, I have been favoured with the use of the great MS. belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge, B. 16, 2, which, besides the philosophical treatise *de Ente*, contains the *Opus Evangelicum*, and a complete set of the Latin sermons. A few (28) of these, part of the 40 sermons "compositi dum stetit in scolis," are in the Lambeth MS. 23. The only other MS. of Wyclif's works which I have been able to reach is the *De Mandatis Divinis* in the University Library at Cambridge (Ll. 5. 13), and I have read only a few chapters of this.

INTRODUCTION.

THE date and place of Wyclif's birth are alike uncertain. Of the date all we know is that he died in 1384, and that he was then an old man, since two years before he speaks of himself as "in fine vitæ."¹ We may place it somewhere about 1320. As to the place, the only information we have is from Leland, who, writing two centuries after the event, tells us that he was born at Spreswell,² and elsewhere says that he sprang from the village of Wycliffe-on-Tees.³ No such village as Spreswell exists,⁴ and we may content ourselves with supposing that he belonged to the family which held the manor of Wycliffe, and that his birthplace was not very far away from the parent house.

We have no record of his early life, and can only guess that in the fourth decade of the century he went to Oxford, where

¹ See *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. xii.

² They say that John Wiclif hæreticus was born at Spreswell, a poore village, a good myle from Richemont.—*Itinerarium*, v. 99.

³ Unde Wigelif hæreticus originem duxit.—*Collectanea*, ii. 329.

⁴ Two different attempts have been made to account for Spreswell. Whitaker suggested that the village meant was Hipswell, and this is made more probable by Mr. Walbran's discovery that in an old MS. of extracts from Leland the name is given as Ipreswell (*Harleian* 842, lf. 76). Dr. Vaughan on the other hand gives an explanation which would be most satisfactory if we could accept it. In a letter to the *Athenæum* of April 20, 1861, he writes, "Spreswell, or Speswell, stood close to the river Tees, half a mile from Wycliffe, and on the same side of the river." His authority for this statement is "John Chapman, a gentleman of respectable position in Gainsford," whose great-grandfather was the last person married in a chapel which stood there till, soon after his marriage, it fell down. To the objection that this Spreswell would be at least ten miles from Richmond, Dr. Vaughan replies that there is a spot about three miles below Wycliffe marked in the local maps as Old Richmond. The existence of a Richmond older than that which takes its name from the Castle founded by Alan of Brittany is impossible, and the name is probably an antiquary's guess as to the ruined village of Barford. It makes its first appearance, as far as I can discover, on a map of 1770. No trace of this Spreswell, which is *not* "within a good mile of Richmond," can be found to support Mr. Chapman's statement. I have gone into detail on this point, because Dr. Lechler has, very naturally, treated Dr. Vaughan's statement as conclusive.

doubtless he followed with assiduity and success the regular course of study. What this was we may learn from the laws published by Mr. Anstey. Four years were passed in verbal studies—grammar, rhetoric, and logic—before the student could determine and be admitted a bachelor; three full years must be given to science—arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy—before inception as a Master.¹ These seven years' labours won but the Leah of an Arts degree; he who would attain to the Rachel of theology had to pass through another and longer service. Seven years were needed before, as a Bachelor of Theology, he could lecture on the Sentences; and, lastly, he must study the Bible "biblice" for three years and lecture on one of the Canonical books before he could come forth in his full glory as a Master or Doctor of Theology.² Thus the full course required at least seventeen years, and might be delayed indefinitely by absence from the University.

The special bent of Wyclif's studies we have to divine from hints scattered through his works. These show that he had devoted some time to the acquisition of such physical science as was to be gained in the Oxford of that day, where Grossetete's name was held in honour, and where men were probably still living who had known Roger Bacon. "It is well worth notice," says Dr. Lechler, "how often and with what predilection Wyclif refers to this domain of knowledge. At one time it is arithmetic or geometry which furnishes him with illustrations of some truth or relation; at another he uses physical or chemical laws, facts of optics or acoustics, to explain moral or religious truths."³ Wyclif tells us expressly that he had studied optics in his youth.⁴

¹ *Munimenta Academica* (Rolls Series), pp. 410, 416. The list of books to be read for the Master's degree is given on p. 414. This double course of studies, the Trivium and Quadrivium, is summed up in the line "Lingua, tropus, ratio; numerus, tonus, angulus, astra."

² *Id.* pp. 389, 391.

³ Lechler, *Johann von Wiclif*, i. 280.

⁴ Quando fui junior et in delectacione vaga magis sollicitus, collegi diffuse proprietates lucis ex codicibus perspective et alias veritates mathematicas, quas secundum consideracionem ad finem moralem concepi in Scriptura intelligi.—Sermons, ii. 53, MS. Trin. Coll. Cambridge, 226b. In the same sermon he notices the experiment of making a coin visible by covering it with water to show refraction.

In another direction Lewis claims for him a knowledge of Civil and Canon Law and of our own municipal laws.¹ Some acquaintance with the Canon Law was needful to a theologian, and was not wanting to Wyclif; but it would be hard to show that he had made a special study of Civil Law, or that he knew more of the Common Law of England than might be expected from the active part which he took in University life and in State affairs.

One would like to know who were his teachers, but, in spite of numerous quotations, his writings give us no hint of personal relations with the men from whom he learned most. He probably took his doctrine of Predestination from Bradwardine, and his theory of Dominion from Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh; while he may have caught from William of Ockham, the bold defender of the Empire against the Pope, his strong belief that it is the duty of priests to live in poverty. Any or all of these he may have known, and he must almost certainly have been brought into contact with Fitzralph. I do not know whom we are to look to as his master in philosophy. Dr. Lorimer, relying on Wood's statement that the Northerners held with Scotus and the Southerners with Ockham, suggests that his birthplace determined his philosophical opinions and made him a Realist.²

Happily we may now cease from speculating on what may have been, as we arrive at the first certain fact recorded concerning Wyclif, that in 1360 he was Master of Balliol College.³ The next year the College presented him to the living of Fillingham, in Lincolnshire, and shortly afterwards he resigned his mastership.⁴ His acceptance of this cure does not seem to have kept him long away from Oxford. He had already written most if not all of the logical and metaphysical treatises which won for him the reputation, recorded by an unfriendly chronicler, that "he was second to none in philosophy, and without peer in the

¹ Lewis, p. 2.

² Lechler, English Translation, i. 150. (Additional note by translator.)

³ On May 18th, 1361, Wyclif was summoned in the Court of Common Pleas as Master of le Baillolhalle.—Hist. Man. Commission, Report, iv. p. 448. It seems as if Balliol were the family college of the Wyclifs. See Fasc. Ziz. xi. note 1.

⁴ On February 3rd, 1362, Stephen de Cornwall was Master.—H.M.C. iv. 450.

learning of the schools,"¹ whilst his energy and practical sagacity had made him a man of mark and influence in the University. In 1365 he was appointed Warden of Canterbury Hall. This college, which has since been absorbed in Christchurch, had been founded two years before by Simon Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury. The foundation was originally for eleven scholars, eight seculars and three monks, under a warden who was to be a monk chosen by the Archbishop from three presentees of Christchurch Convent.² This mixed constitution worked ill, and in 1365 the Archbishop removed the monks and made the college entirely secular, under Wyclif as its new warden. The chapter-convent resented this infringement of its rights, and when, after Islip's death, a monk, Simon Langham, was appointed Archbishop, little time was lost in replacing the monks and the original warden. Wyclif appealed to the Pope, but the influence of Archbishop and Convent was powerful, and the decision, after three years' litigation, was against him.³

There are always persons who can believe in no motive that is not selfish, and there were enemies of Wyclif who imputed his reforming zeal to his disappointment in this affair. Such charges may sometimes be useful as giving the measure of those who bring them. We may well believe, however, that Wyclif's experience during this lawsuit may have brought home to him the corruptions of the Court of Avignon, and may have led him to use sharper language than he had hitherto employed concerning ecclesiastical abuses.

The office of Warden of Canterbury cannot for its own sake have been of great importance. Its income, which we cannot suppose to have been great, can have had little attraction for one whose habits were ascetic,⁴ and whose worst enemies never

¹ Knighton, 2644.

² It will be remembered that Canterbury was a monastic cathedral, and the chapter consisted of the Christchurch monks.

³ There has been much dispute as to whether the John Wyclif of Canterbury Hall were the reformer or his contemporary namesake, who was vicar of Mayfield. I do not think we can resist the direct evidence of Woodford (quoted F. Z. 517) and the *Chronicon Angliæ* (p. 115), strengthened as they are by the passage from the *De Ecclesia* cited by Dr. Lechler (ii. 574).

⁴ Fasc. Ziz. xlv.

ventured to accuse him of greed. Nor did he need the honour which such a position might give, for his fame had spread beyond Oxford, and at the time when Langham deprived him of his mastership he was high in the King's favour and held some office, probably a royal chaplaincy, at the court.¹ This appears from a paper printed by Lewis,² which forms one step in a controversy between Wyclif and some unknown monk on the right of kings to exact fines and forfeitures from delinquent priests. The monk tried to cut the ground from under Wyclif's feet by asserting that the King had lost his right to rule in England, since he had failed to pay the Pope the annual rent of 700 marks by which the realm was held according to the terms of John's submission. To this, as a clinching argument, he demanded a direct answer. Wyclif knew, or at least suspected, that his opponent was trying to entrap him into utterances which could be used to his disadvantage. He declares himself surprised that his opponent should press him to answer an argument which does not concern him more than any other speculative theologian or legist. "But," he says, "three reasons have been given me why he acts thus: first, that I may be ill-spoken of at the Roman Court, and be deprived by heavy censures of ecclesiastical benefices. Secondly, that hence the favour of the Roman Court may be reflected upon him and his. And, thirdly, that our Lord the Pope having freer rule in England, civil possessions may be more plentifully heaped upon the abbeys without the check of fraternal rebuke."³ Accordingly

¹ He describes himself as "*peculiaris regis clericus*" (Lewis, p. 349), and is taunted by his opponent Cunningham with being of the house of Herod.—Fasc. Ziz. p. 14.

² Life of Wiclif, p. 349. Lewis's text is very bad; "the fault of his MS.," says Dr. Shirley. There is a copy at Lambeth (No. 537), in the handwriting of Dr. James, which is very much better, and I have corrected my quotations from this.

³ *Et miror quam plurimum quare cum tanta instantia expetunt [?expetivit] solutionem hujus rationis et tractatum istius materiæ, et specialiter cum tantum sit ipsa mihi et rationibus meis indifferens sicut cuicunque speculativo theologo vel legistæ. Et pepigimus quod non quærendo diverticulas alienas, peripsimata fructus quæ colimus, vel ambages proccdet directe ad improbandum questionem quam principaliter pepigit impugnare. Sed tres causæ dictæ sunt michi cur hoc facit; primo ut persona mea sit ad Romanam Curiam diffamata et aggravatis censuris ab ecclesiasticis beneficiis sit privata. Secundo, ut exhinc sibi et suis benevolentia Romanæ Curiae sit reportata. Et tertia causa, ut, dominante domino Papa regno Angliæ liberius, copiosius et voluptuosius sine freno correptionis fraternæ sint Abbathiis civilia dominia cumulata.*—Lewis, 351.

Wyclif refuses to pronounce upon the question, but contents himself with setting out the answers which he has heard given in a certain council of lay lords. Now there can be little doubt as to the occasion referred to by Wyclif. In 1366 Urban V. claimed the arrears of tribute due under John's vassalage. Edward referred the claim to Parliament, which rejected it without hesitation, on the ground that John had no power to bind the realm without its assent; and the lay lords offered further that if the Pope should make any attempt to enforce his claim, they would resist it with all their might.¹ We have then in this paper of Wyclif's what purports to be a partial report of the debate on this occasion, and it is accepted as such alike by Dr. Lechler and Dr. Shirley.² I confess to much doubt on this point. I can believe that some, and even most, of the arguments given in the tract were used in the Council-room; but the speeches recorded are curiously Wyclifite in their tone, and the parliaments of Edward the Third's time must have been singularly unlike those that have succeeded them if each speaker confined himself to urging one definite and distinct point as in this report. Whatever the lords really said, their chief use here is to act as mouthpieces for opinions which Wyclif wished to support, and from this point of view the tract is important, as showing how many of his characteristic tenets he had already arrived at. Thus from the speech of the second lord we see that Wyclif already held that voluntary poverty was incumbent on the clergy. The third lord treats the Pope with a roughness which Wyclif, speaking in his own person, would hardly have ventured on until later in his career. He argues that tribute can only be due to the servant of the servants of God³ in return for service, and "we know by

¹ Rot. Parl. II. 290a.

² Lechler, i. 330; Shirley, F. Z. xix. Dr. Shirley is mistaken in saying, "We know that it set the question at rest for ever." Gregory XI. repeated the demand in 1374, and we have a curious account of the way in which it was met and refused in the continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, iii. 337. We might fancy that this was a misplaced narrative of what took place in 1366 but for the prominent part played by the Prince of Wales, who was out of England in that year. We assign Wyclif's tract to the earlier occasion, on the ground that the phrase about "ecclesiastical benefices" refers probably to the Canterbury Hall Wardenship.

³ *Servus servorum Dei*, the title generally used by the Pope of himself in bulls and formal letters.

experience that we get neither bodily nor spiritual help from Pope or Cardinals.”¹ Passing by the rest we must note the sixth lord's speech. “Since,” he says, “Christ is the chief lord, and the Pope is a sinner who, according to the theologians, if in mortal sin lacks dominion, and cannot consequently transmit to the English any right to the kingdom, all we need for a true dominion over the realm is to keep ourselves from mortal sin and give of our wealth rightly to the poor, and so hold our kingdom, as hitherto, immediately from Christ, since he is the chief lord, giving of himself full and sufficient authority to all dominion of the creature.” Here we have clearly laid down the famous doctrine of dominion as founded in grace, of which more must be said presently. Meanwhile the tone of the tract shows that Wyclif was actively engaged in political life. “If,” says he, “I had such things to assert against my king, they would have been brought forward before now in the parliament of the lords of England,”² and this remark gives some colour to Dr. Lechler's supposition that Wyclif had a seat in Parliament.³ Dr. Lechler even goes further, and takes the description “*peculiaris regis clericus*” to mean that Wyclif was summoned to the Parliament of 1366 as a clerical expert, or, in modern phrase, as a Government Commissioner. The clerks of Parliament were, I believe, appointed by the House, and I doubt if any one else was admitted to the sittings besides the elected members, but it is possible that Wyclif may have been summoned to the Great Council.⁴

Whatever the official position which Wyclif occupied, he was not at this time a solitary advocate of novel ideas, but a

¹ Cum non edificat regnum nostrum, nec spiritualiter nec corporaliter, sed defalcando temporalia per se et suos, confortat pecunia, favore et consilio inimicos, videtur quod debemus provide premissam pensionem subtrahere.—Lewis, 352. I should find no difficulty in believing that such language as this was used in the debate; it is characteristic of the temper of the time.

² Lewis, 350.

³ Lechler, i. 331 et seq. It must, however, be remarked that the taunt conveyed here would be more effective if it meant that his opponent had a seat in Parliament, but wanted courage to speak out there.

⁴ See Stubbs' Const. Hist. ii. 259, 260. There are at least two other occasions on which Wyclif speaks of having heard something in Parliament. See Shirley, F. Z. xxi. and Lechler, i. 332.

prominent supporter of views which were popular in the country. The laity, and especially the gentry, were straitened in their means. The wealth, which in the earlier and more brilliant years of the French war poured in from plunder and ransoms, had been wasted, and the heavy taxation aroused a jealousy of the clergy, who seemed in comparison but lightly burdened. Englishmen were also jealous of the power wielded by the Papal Court, now seated at Avignon, and in too close relations with their French enemies. In 1371 this jealousy of the clergy found vent in a petition from the Commons that the great offices of state should be taken from the bishops who held them and entrusted to lay hands.¹ In the same year the taxation of the clergy was made heavier, and special attention was directed to lands held by the Religious which, having come into mortmain since 1291, were subject to pay their share of a lay subsidy.² A passage quoted by Dr. Shirley³ from Wyclif's treatise on Civil Dominion makes it appear that the confiscation of endowments to support the war was spoken of seriously in Parliament.

In the following year distrust of Avignon was roused anew by the advent of a papal collector, one Arnold Guarnerius. He was compelled to take an oath to be true and loyal to the King, to keep the Council informed as to all letters, papal or others, that he received, and neither to send money out of the realm, nor to leave it himself without special licence.⁴ Still more significant of the temper of the Commons is a petition of this year praying the King to deprive any beneficed priest or curate who lives openly with a concubine, if after six months the Ordinary has failed to do so.⁵ Evidently the times were changed since Becket carried the popular voice with him in claiming freedom from the lay courts for clergymen even when guilty of crime.

While the nation was thus ill-disposed towards the whole ecclesiastical system, its disgust and indignation were specially directed against the Papal Court, and against the provisions by which the French Pope was able to bestow rich English benefices

¹ Rot. Parl. ii. 304.

³ Fasc. Ziz. xxi.

⁵ Rot. Parl. ii. 314.

² Stubbs, Const. Hist. ii. 423.

⁴ Rymer, iii. p. ii, 933.

on foreigners who never came near their cure.¹ Year after year the Parliament renewed its complaints, until, in 1374, a mission was sent to Bruges to treat with the Pope's representatives on this matter. Wyclif was one of the Commissioners, and his name was put prominently forward; but even then the trick was known of putting a popular man on a commission, and neutralizing his efforts by associating him with obstructives. The King and the Pope had their jealousies and their quarrels, but they could often work together to mutual profit, and the system was practically left untouched, to be a cause of remonstrance to many more parliaments. Within a few months the law against provisions was repealed, and a papal provision translated the head of the Commission, Gilbert, Bishop of Bangor, to the richer see of Hereford.

We may well suppose, with Dr. Lechler, that this embassy, however fruitless as to its main object, was not without effect on Wyclif himself. As far as we know it was the first time he had been out of England, and his stay in Bruges² brought him into contact with leading ecclesiastics—Spanish, French, and Italian—and gave him an insight into the ways and motives of the Papal Court. There is another manner in which it may have influenced his career. John of Gaunt was at Bruges, engaged in negotiations with France, and is likely to have come into closer relation with Wyclif than before.

The time was coming when Wyclif would need a protector. In 1377 the first attempt was made to call him to account. He had been snarling at the Church for some time, we are told, in revenge for his deprivation of the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall, and had begun to promulgate false opinions such as, in

¹ Die Gemeinen befanden sich in ihrem vollen Rechte. Nicht etwa vom wycliffischen sondern vom strengkatholischen Standpunkte aus musste getadelt werden, wenn vom Kircheneinkommen jährlich mehr als 20,000 Mark dem in Avignon residirenden Papste und den Cardinälen zufflossen, von welchen man sich nach kurzer Zeit (1378) überzeugen konnte, wie wenig ihnen die Interessen der Kirche am Herzen lagen. Ihre Interessen bestanden darin, dass ein Cardinal Dechant von York, ein anderer von Salisbury, ein dritter von Lincoln, drei andere Erzdechanten von Canterbury, von Durham und Suffolk, mehrere Praebendarien von Tham, von Nassingdon, von York waren.—C. Höfler, Anna von Luxemburg, p. 17. Höfler, a Catholic, may be trusted not to exaggerate abuses.

² He was away from July 7th to September 14th.

spite of their emptiness, tickled the ears of those who listened to him.¹ Of his false doctrines only a few are specified, and those not the worst. They are—that the Pope has no power in binding and loosing more than other priests; that endowments cannot be given in perpetuity, since it will always be right to withdraw them from unworthy holders; and that temporal lords, if in need, may seize the possessions of the endowed clergy.² He gained many followers of high rank,³ among whom were the Duke of Lancaster and Lord Henry Percy, and relying on their support preached his heresies boldly in London, and attracted many of the citizens. At last the Bishops (Courtenay probably the most active among them) stirred up the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, who but for the pressure put on him would have preferred a quiet life, and Wyclif was summoned to appear at St. Paul's on February 23. He obeyed the summons, but not after the fashion of one who has to humble himself before men in authority. He was accompanied by Lord Henry Percy and the Duke. They forced their way violently through the crowd assembled in the Cathedral, in spite of the rebuke of the Bishop of London, who declared he would have refused them entrance had he expected such behaviour. Having reached the Lady Chapel, where the Court was to be held, the Duke and Barons took their place beside the Bishop, and Lord Henry Percy bade Wyclif be seated. "He had need of a soft seat since he had many things to answer." Courtenay not unreasonably insisted on his standing while his cause was being tried. This led to a quarrel, in which the Duke joined; but in strong language the Bishop was a match for the two. Some hasty words of the Duke's caused an excitement among the

¹ *Chronicon Angliæ*, 115. My narrative here is mainly an abridgment of that in the *Chronicon*.

² These charges seem to be fairly stated, with the reservation that by "temporal lords" must be understood the government of the state, acting for public purposes.

³ Wyclif's strongest supporters seem to have been among the gentry. "Oo comfort is of knyȝttis," he says, "þat þei savoren myche þe gospel and han wille to rede in Englishe þe gospel of Cristis liif."—Sermon lxvi. (*S. E. W.* i. 209.) Until he sent out his poor preachers, he could only appeal to those who had wealth to get books and education to read them.

crowd of citizens, and in the tumult the Court broke up without having accomplished anything.¹

Dr. Shirley attributes all these proceedings to the Bishops' wish to strike at John of Gaunt through his client, and this may well have been one among several motives that urged them to action. Yet apart from this they had reasons enough for desiring to silence Wyclif. To say nothing of the hatred that greedy men bear to those who threaten their gains (and there was much greed among the higher clergy), we cannot doubt that the mass of churchmen, then as always, wished to see the Church increasing in wealth, honour, and worldly influence.² How could they but be shocked at a priest who aimed at stripping the Church of endowments, and reducing its prelates from the magnificence, in which they vied with the greatest nobles, to a simple life, where the only rivalry should be in poverty and humility? If the Bishops were slow to act, it was probably because they knew how strongly Wyclif was supported, and dreaded the storm which they were sure to arouse; and it may even be true, as Walsingham tells us, that it needed the Pope's command to goad them into activity. In any case this first move had failed. It may have had the result of making Lancaster more unpopular, but it left Wyclif's position at least as strong as before he was attacked.

News must soon have reached Rome³ that the heretic had baffled the attempt to silence him, and that the assault must be renewed in a more formal and deliberate manner. Nineteen conclusions attributed to Wyclif were selected, and condemned as erroneous or heretical.⁴ It is probably to the time when this

¹ Walsingham, whose account is much shorter than that in the *Chronicon*, differs materially on two points. He says that the prosecution was due to the orders of the Pope, and that the result of the Council was that the Archbishop imposed silence on Wyclif.—Wals. i. 325.

² A good example of such feeling in an honest churchman is Laud's exultation at the appointment of Juxon as treasurer, "and now if the Church will not hold up themselves under God, I can do no more."—Quoted by Mr. Gardiner, *Personal Government of Charles I.*, ii. 246.

³ Gregory had arrived there from Avignon in January.

⁴ These were picked out from a list of about fifty which had been sent to the Curia.—Appendix to *Chron. Angliæ*, p. 396. It is to be regretted that due honour has not been done to the senders. One of the most interesting and most hopeless problems in this matter is, whence came the first impulse to a prosecution.

list was being prepared, and when the Bishops, smarting under defeat, were looking forward to their revenge, that we must assign an outburst of the Bishop of Rochester, who told Wyclif in Parliament that his conclusions had been condemned by the Curia.¹ The Roman Court had evidently determined that the work should be done effectively this time. A series of bulls was sent over to England. One was addressed to the University of Oxford, and ordered that Wyclif should not under any pretence be allowed to defend his evil teaching, but should at once be arrested and delivered to the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London. To these two prelates came three other bulls; one enjoining them to warn the King and nobles against Wyclif's errors; another commanding them to secure Wyclif at once, and examine him as to the doctrines of which he was accused, to send to Rome a report of the examination, and keep him in chains until the Pope's pleasure was made known. In case they should be unable to carry out these instructions, the third bull instructed them to summon Wyclif to appear in the Papal Court for judgment within three months. A fifth bull was addressed to the King, praying him to facilitate the execution of the others.²

The bulls do not seem to have met with an eager welcome. The Bishops were probably disheartened by their recent failure, and saw that the times were unpropitious, for the King was on his death-bed and Lancaster was the chief power in the State,³ so they lay by for awhile and made no attempt to execute their commission. True, soon after Richard's coronation, Lancaster withdrew from public life for a short period; but the government was not more favourable to Rome than before. At this very time, when Wyclif was under the shadow of the papal condemnation, the Great Council asked for his judgment on the question whether they could rightly refuse to allow money to be carried out of the realm in spite of the Pope's demands. His

¹ Unde episcopus Roffensis dixit mihi in publico parlamento stomachando spiritu, quod conclusiones meæ sunt dampnatæ, sicut testificatum est sibi de curia per Instrumentum notarii.—De Ecclesia, c. 15; quoted by Lechler, i. 332.

² The bulls are in Walsingham, i. 345, and Chron. Angliæ, 174.

³ The bulls were dated May 22nd. Edward III. died June 21.

answer is uncompromising.¹ He does not merely allow that they may refuse, he insists that they are bound to do so. As to the dangers attending such a course, it is not likely, he says, that the Pope will lay an interdict on England; and "even if the disciple of Antichrist should break forth into such madness, one comfort is that such pretended censures are not binding before God."² He goes on to urge that the superfluous wealth of the clergy should be withdrawn from them, and what is left so used as to establish true peace in the Church. This indirect challenge was bold enough; and soon afterwards, at the meeting of Parliament, Wyclif laid before it a pamphlet in which he enumerated the charges brought against him, and defended himself on each.³ To the public he appealed in another tract, written anonymously, specially directed against the validity of unjust excommunication, which if allowed, he says, would set the Pope above God, and ruin the Christian Church.⁴ Seven months after the date of the bulls the Commissaries plucked up courage to proceed. On December 18th they sent down a letter to the University, inclosing the Pope's bulls, and ordering their execution. The University was to gather all possible information concerning the conclusions and send it on to the Bishops, while Wyclif was to be cited to appear before them after thirty days.⁵ Immediately on the receipt of the letter, a congregation was held to consider what course should be taken. Wyclif and his friends maintained that to imprison him at the Pope's request would be to allow the Pope's rule in England. On the other hand, it was generally felt that the papal command could not be entirely disregarded, and the Vice-Chancellor (a monk)

¹ Printed in Fasc. Ziz. p. 258.

² Sed supposito quod Antichristi discipulus prorumpet in tantam vesaniam, unum solamen est quod tales praetensae censurae non obligant quoad Deum.—F.Z. 265. This is a reaffirmation of the doctrines condemned in Conclusions Nos. 8, 15.

³ Fasc. Ziz. 245.

⁴ De Condemnatione XIX Conclusionum.—Fas. Ziz. 481, etc. To these tracts of defence and counter attack we may add one on the oath taken by the Papal Collector in 1372 (see above, p. viii), where Wyclif urges that the Collector should be looked after more strictly and made to keep his oath. We cannot fix an exact date to this tract, but it belongs to the beginning of Richard's reign. Printed in Lechler, ii. 576.

⁵ The letter is in Lewis, Appendix No. 17, p. 314.

ordered Wyclif to remain a prisoner in Black Hall.¹ The conclusions were then submitted to the regent masters in Theology, and these gave in their opinions to the Chancellor, who determined on their behalf that the conclusions were true, but likely to cause scandal.² The writer to whom we owe this account goes on to say that Wyclif proved the truth of the conclusions before the Archbishop and the Bishop of London, who requested him to cease from discussing the subject of them.³ We may doubt whether his unaided arguments would have been so convincing, but he was strongly supported. The London populace, which had now rallied to his support, broke into the chapel at Lambeth and interrupted the proceedings. What was of far more weight, the Princess Joan sent a message forbidding any decision against Wyclif, which struck such terror into the Bishops that they became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.⁴ And, as if this interference had not sufficiently indicated the leanings of the Court, the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was called to account for his partial obedience to the Pope's commands, was thrown into prison for a time, and compelled to resign his office.⁵ Soon afterwards the Pope died, and no further action was taken upon the bulls.

It may be supposed that Wyclif was not cowed by this prosecution. He drew up a summary of his opinions in thirty-three conclusions, which he circulated in Latin and English, and which were in some way forwarded to the Roman Court. Yet he had to be careful for his personal safety, and did not appear when cited again, for he had been told that the Archbishop had applied to him the text, "a little while and ye shall see him, and again a little while and ye shall not see him." He adds that many are taught (he knows not by whom) that it

¹ The imprisonment was evidently merely formal, and it seems likely that Wyclif lodged at Black Hall. There may have been two Halls of that name, as in *Mun. Acad.* (p. 240) we find mention of a "little Black Hall."

² *Eas veras esse sed male sonare in auribus auditorum.*—*Eulogium Historiarum* (continuation), iii. 347.

³ The paper presented in his defence is in *Chron. Angliæ*, 184, *Wals.* i. 357.

⁴ *Chron. Angliæ*, 183. *Wals.* i. 356.

⁵ *Eulogium Historiarum*, iii. 348.

would be a work of charity to put him out of the way by burning or otherwise.¹

A novel ferment was now introduced into Wyclif's active mind. Urban VI. had been Pope only a few months when the Cardinals, alienated by his fierce temper and desirous to return to Avignon, elected an Antipope, Clement VII. The rivals at once began to contend by force of arms for the spiritual fatherhood of Christendom. Each proclaimed a crusade, offering unheard-of indulgences to all who supported him, and pardon-mongers spread abroad through Europe, vaunting their wares with a cynicism unsurpassed by Tetzel.² No wonder that Wyclif was deeply moved, and that we may now mark a new departure in his teaching. Hitherto, however severely he spoke of the Pope and the Curia, he had acknowledged the primacy of the Roman See; now he began to proclaim that the Church would be better without a Pope. Nor is the change in him confined to an alteration in his views as to the constitution of the Church. Hitherto we have seen him mixed up with practical politics, taking part in them from the ecclesiastical side and for religious purposes, but as counsellor or pamphleteer urging, supporting or defending the policy carried out by lay statesmen. Henceforth he withdraws into the purely religious domain, and contents himself with striving by personal influence and writing to purge the Church of abuses, and induce his countrymen to purer and more spiritual views of religion. We must not, however, exaggerate the change in him, which was probably unconscious. In relating the middle period of Wyclif's life, the biographer necessarily dwells on the moments when his subject comes out into full light and shows himself engaged in action, and passes over the unrecorded private life, and that quiet work of influencing friends and disciples, which may have been the most important of activities. In the lives of most men of letters the years are marked by the succession of books, but

¹ See the quotation from the *De Veritate Sanctæ Scripturæ* in *Fasc. Ziz.* xxxiv.

² Dicebatur enim quod quidam de Commissariis suis asserebant quod ad eorum præceptum angeli de cælo descenderent et animas in purgatoriis locis positas de poenis eriperent et ad cælos absque mora deducerent.—Knighton, 2671. Compare the account of the proceedings of the Cardinal of St. Praxed.—Wals. i. 452.

although the mass of Wyclif's work shows that his literary production was unceasing, we are still unacquainted with the details of it. We cannot date with certainty any of his books written before 1378, and until his works are printed we cannot hope to range them even approximately in order, or to trace their relation to his active life. But in spite of all difficulty as to dates, we cannot doubt that by this time he had set his hand to two great tasks of a purely religious character—the training of his poor priests, and the translation of the Bible.

Wyclif's aim in instituting the poor priests was to supply the defects of the existing parsons, who too often, after collecting their tithes and dues, held the saying of services to be their only duty, and left their flock without preaching or spiritual instruction. The want had long been felt, and the mendicant orders were founded in the attempt to meet it. Preaching had been the distinctive work of the Dominicans, while the Franciscans had settled in the worst and most neglected parts of the towns and had laboured assiduously among the poor. But societies which lived by begging were always tempted to win popular favour in unworthy ways, and before the end of the fourteenth century the friars had won an unenviable reputation, which may be read in every story-book or satire of the time. The task that they had failed in was yet to be done, and Wyclif tried to train men to do it. "To be poor without mendicancy," says Dr. Shirley, "to combine the flexible unity, the swift obedience of an order, with free and constant mingling among the poor, such was the ideal of Wyclif's simple priests."¹ And he goes on to suggest that, if Wyclif had died before his denial of transubstantiation, "his name might have come down to us in another form, and miracles have been wrought at the tomb of their founder by the brothers preachers of St. John Wyclif." In this last suggestion Dr. Shirley scarcely does justice to Wyclif's practical insight. The tendency of all human things to crystallize into set forms might have made the poor priests into an order, but if so the spirit and intention of their founder would have been lost. No formal initiation, no irrevocable

¹ Fasc. Ziz. xl.

vow, indeed no vows at all, seem to have been required from these disciples of his. He set before them his ideal of the Christian ministry—voluntary poverty and faithful preaching—and urged them to act upon it. Their itinerancy was but an accident of the time, a means of meeting the difficulties that they were to encounter;¹ and to bind them by vows or special observances would have been directly contrary to the freedom of the gospel as Wyclif preached it. It must be noticed that Wyclif's views on this point are quite as important from the practical side as from the ideal. If you look upon an order or a rule of life as higher and more holy than others, you will naturally wish to attract men to it, and dread to injure them by exclusion; you will attempt to fortify them by vows and all other safeguards against falling back into a lower state; and in consequence you will be burdened with a number of adherents who have no real vocation, and are constantly seeking to adapt the rule to their requirements, instead of trying to live up to it.² Wyclif had before him the history of all the religious orders as a warning against this danger, and he seems specially to have shunned this rock which had been so fatal to them.³ I take it that in the poor priests we are not to see the attempted foundation of a new order, but an effort to excite and utilize the energies of individuals who had come under Wyclif's influence.

Of his other religious task, the translation of the Bible, I need say little; its consequence to English religion and the English tongue is generally recognized. We have but to look at the long list of MSS. given at the beginning of Forshall and Madden's great edition,⁴ and to remember that these are but

¹ See the tract, *Why poor priests have no benefice*, No. XVI., especially the close, and the *De Officio Pastoralis*, No. XXVII.

² “And þis is a gret disceit of þe fend under colour of perfeccion and chastite. For he stireþ men to heiȝe poyntis of perfeccion when he knowiþ or supposiþ hem unable.”—S. E. W. iii. 190.

³ “It is lichly þat Cristis preestis, þat stooden til þat monkes comen, turneden to myche fro Cristis lawe and monkes lyveden þan wel beter. But þes monkes stoden awhile, and turneden souner to coveitise; and aftir monkes camen þes chanouns; and after chanouns camen freris. And so greet defaute was in prestis bifore þat þes newe ordris camen in. But as þes newe ordris changen in cloþis, in bokis, wiþ oþer ritis, so þei varien in Goddis office fro þat þat Crist bad his preestis do.”—*The Church and Her Members*, S. E. W. iii. 345.

⁴ There are 170 numbers.

the gleanings, after time, neglect, and the zeal of the inquisitor have gathered in their harvests, and we see how widely the translation was disseminated; how eagerly men caught at the opportunity of reading the Bible in their mother-tongue.

These labours, even without the further evidence supplied by his books, are enough to show that when most engaged in politics Wyclif's aim was religious reform, and that he was not merely an ecclesiastical agitator. Many causes may have combined to withdraw him from the political arena. Dr. Shirley suggests that Urban's removal from Avignon, and still more his quarrel with the King of France, had restored the popularity of the Papacy, and that Wyclif was no longer supported against Rome by the national feeling; but the strong petition against provisions and Urban's abuse of them in the parliament of January, 1380,¹ shows that the English jealousy of the Curia was not overpast. Probably as Wyclif became more and more involved in theological controversies, his eagerness as to public affairs decreased; while the passions which he had roused against him made him less valuable as an ally or an agent. We shall presently see cause to believe that he had not forfeited the favour of his powerful protectors.

The immediate effect of the Great Schism, and the quarrels which accompanied it, was to bring Wyclif into undisguised opposition to the Papacy as an institution; and once fairly started in his campaign, he directed his assault against the whole line of the Church system then existing. The luxurious and worldly lives of monks and prelates; the prevalence of unworthy influence and simony in the presentation to benefices; the gross abuses of the bishops' and archdeacons' courts, especially the practice of exacting fines for incontinence and other sins instead of requiring amendment; all these gave wide scope for denunciation. Even the most orthodox reckoned such things wrong, and men who were canonized saints had inveighed against them as bitterly as Wyclif; but there was this novelty in his method that, instead of laying all blame on individuals, he looked for the root of the evil in the authorized constitution and

¹ Rot. Parl. iii. 82.

practices of the Church. Thus when he attacked the luxury of the prelates, he did not content himself with lamenting that his contemporaries had fallen so far from the apostolic standard, but denounced the principle of endowment, introduced as he believed by Constantine, and urged the rulers of the State to take away the riches which corrupted the Church. He found another weapon against the dominant hierarchy in appealing to the presbyterian constitution of the primitive Church, in which bishops and priests were the same.¹ The bishops, he says, have reserved to themselves confirmation, ordination, and the consecration of places, but such reservations hinder and do not profit the Church.²

Against the grossly superstitious customs of the day Wyclif's method was the same. The root of almost all these was a belief in the unlimited effect of the priest's absolution, and in the power of the Church to grant indulgences. Without this the pardon-mongers would have gone away empty; the shrines would have remained unvisited; no throng of pilgrims would have poured money into the Roman treasury; no gold and jewels would have been lavished at Walsingham and Canterbury. Wyclif declared that only true penitence and confession to God were needed to gain his pardon, and that the enforcement of private confession was a mischievous practice of late introduction. He scorned as a fiction the doctrine of saints' merits laid up in reserve at the disposal of the Pope.³ All merit, he

¹ Sed unum audacter assero, quod in primitiva ecclesia ut tempore Pauli suffecerunt duo ordines clericorum scilicet sacerdos atque diaconus. Secundo dico quod in tempore apostoli fuit idem presbyter atque episcopus tunc enim non fuit adinventata distinctio papæ et cardinalium, patriarcharum et archiepiscoporum, episcoporum et archidiaconorum, officialium et decanorum cum ceteris officiariis et religionibus privatis quorum non est numerus neque ordo.—Trial. lib. iv. cap. 15, p. 296.

² Itaque omnes operationes concernentes sacerdotes cesarios, in quantum tales, non proficiunt directe ad beatitudinem, sed impediunt vel retardant. Et ita est de tribus dignitatibus sive officiis que episcopus sibi servat; que sunt juvenum confirmacio, clericorum ordinacio et locorum consecracio.—Dialogus, c. 24, MS. Ashburnham, 111b.

³ And so þis fonned fantasye of spiritual tresour in hevene, þat eche pope is maad dispensour of þis tresour at his owne will, þis is a lȳt word, dremed wiþouten ground. For þanne ech pope schulde be lord of þis hevenly tresour, and so he schulde be lord of Crist and oþere seyntis in hevene, ȝe, ȝif he were a fend, as was Judas Schariot. Lord! whi schulde God of hevene make þis fend such a lord? siþ it is propre unto God to dele such meritis, and alle meritis þat beþ in hevene beþ fully rewarded, so þat none is ydil, but nedlyche mut be do.—De Pontificum Romanorum Schismate, S. E. W. iii. 262.

says, is in the hands of God, who keeps to himself the distribution of it. Not only so, but the Pope cannot know the real state of a man, and may grant pardon to one who is in mortal sin, and unable to profit by the gift.¹ With indulgences went all the cognate practices: letters of fraternity, special prayers, masses for particular souls. That these things were widely abused was evident to all, and many a parish priest and prelate would have been glad to see some check placed upon the friars, who were the worst offenders. The evils might have been partially restrained by stricter discipline and the withdrawal of exemptions; but they could be ended only by uprooting the doctrines of which they were the outgrowth. Wyclif seems to have grasped this fact, and to have worked more strenuously against the various forms of indulgence and assigned merit than against any other tenets of the Church. His sagacity was vindicated when, after a century and a half, during which the orthodox reformers had proved their impotence, Luther selected the same point for his first and deadliest assault.

It is not necessary to discuss the minor points in which Wyclif departed from Church tradition, and we may pass on to the great development which marked his last years—his attack on the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Here he was upon new and dangerous ground. Hitherto he had been able to appeal to the moral sense of the laity, and had sometimes been supported by their prejudices and passions. They might care little for the doctrine of Dominion in its scholastic form, but they welcomed eagerly the bold assailant of the outrageous claims and exactions of the Papacy; and this all the more when the Pope was French and an enemy. The magnificence and worldliness of the prelates, the extortions and abuses of the ecclesiastical courts, evidently wanted reform, and there was no need to look closely into the grounds on which reform was urged. Even when Wyclif ventured into a more dogmatic region; when he questioned the priestly power of absolution and the Pope's

¹ Nec indulgenciis debemus credere, sicut nec papa vel sua curia, cum nescit si ista persona cui concedit dictam indulgenciam sit dampnanda; sicut nec scit si sit voluntatis dei concedere quod ipse annuit sic in bullis.—*Dialogus*, c. 13, MS. Ashb. lf. 103b.

authority in purgatory; when he struck at indulgences, special masses, and the numberless devices for making money do the work of goodness and setting future blessedness up to sale, he had still on his side the spiritual instincts of his audience; he was in many cases censuring abuses which were against the authoritative teaching of the Church, although supported by almost all her officers.

In the campaign on which he now entered no such appeal to the interests of morality could serve his turn. The doctrine which he impugned was the result of a constant and instinctive desire on the part of the Christian Church to heighten the dignity of its central act of worship, combined with an unshrinking intellectual analysis. It had been the business of the schoolmen to find a rational and logical theory corresponding to the highest utterances of mystical devotion. The popular mind, intolerant of subtleties, knew nothing of substance or accidents, and when Wyclif raised a question as to the nature of the consecrated bread, his opponents accused him of denying Christ's presence in the host, while his followers fancied that they settled the question by saying that any one could see the host was bread, and the very mice knew it for such.¹

This simple appeal to the senses may have attracted some partisans, but the publication of novel ideas on such a point was certain to give offence to many devout persons, who felt as if the dignity of the sacrament was attacked. One is naturally led to ask what motives impelled Wyclif to this course, and the inquiry is of equal interest whether he be regarded as an earnest reformer or a hunter after popular favour. Perhaps the simplest and most direct way of getting at the truth is to take his own account of the matter: "Of all heresies that have ever sprung up in the Church, I think none was ever more cunningly brought in by hypocrites or cheats the people in more ways than this; for it robs the people, it makes them commit idolatry, it denies the faith of Scripture, and in consequence by unbelief provokes

¹ Wyclif himself throws this as a taunt against his opponents, "*Mures autem habent servatam notitiam de panis substantia sicut primo, sed istis infidelibus istud deest, etc.*"—Trial. iv. 5, p. 260.

the Truth in many ways to anger.”¹ This vehement denunciation, when translated into plain fact, seems to mean that the current doctrine led the people into an excessive and superstitious reverence for the elements of the Sacrament, and that this superstition was made the means of increasing the power and gain of the priesthood. It may be supposed that this is only the moral colouring which a controversialist tries to throw over a cause adopted for other and lower reasons. The decision on this point must depend on the bias of the judge; but in support of Wyclif's statement it may be noted that his opponent Tysington allows that the language used by controversialists might, if spoken before the people, lead them to heathenish notions.² I believe that if we look back to Wyclif's earlier utterances on this subject, made before he had come into collision with the orthodox opinion, we may trace the gradual development which led him to heresy. In a sermon preached, I believe, in 1367, he speaks of various errors relating to the host, and goes on: “It seems enough for the Christian to believe that the body of Christ is in some spiritual and sacramental manner at every point of the consecrated host, and that next after God honour is to be chiefly rendered to that body, and in the third place to that sensible sacrament, as to an image or tomb of Christ.”³ This passage, as indeed the whole of the sermon in which it occurs, shows a disposition to dwell upon the spiritual side in preference to the logical or dogmatic account of the Sacrament. Such a disposition, not in itself incompatible with orthodoxy, was likely to be strengthened in him by a philosophical

¹ Trialogus, iv. 2, p. 248.

² “Non tamen vulgariter et coram laicis conceditur communiter videri aut sentiri, nisi cum hac determinatione in forma et specie panis; ne populus pronus ad idolatriam, nesciens distinguere inter sensibile in se et sensibile in alio, credat speciem panis, aut aliud quod immediate et in se sentitur, esse corpus Christi; et sic, ut dictum est, turpiter paganizent.”—Fasc. Ziz. 173.

³ Multi ex dicto isto capiunt occasionem erroris, putantes hii quod panis est corpus Christi, hii quod panis fiet et est corpus Christi, hii quod panis convertetur in corpus Christi per desicionem (sic) panis secundum quamlibet ejus partem, et sic de multis ficticiis ex quibus infideles despiciunt fidem nostram. Videtur igitur satis esse Christiano credere quod corpus Christi sit quodam modo spirituali [et] sacramentali ad omne punctum hostie consecrate, et quod illi corpori sit post deo honor principaliter tribuendus, et tercio loco illi sacramento sensibili tanquam ymagini vel sepulcro Christi.—Early Sermons, No. XX. MS. Lambeth, 23.

difficulty in satisfying himself as to any theory of transubstantiation. On this point there is a connexion between his earliest and latest doctrines, which seems hitherto to have escaped the notice of his biographers. In one of his early works, 'De Ente,' a treatise of 350 closely-written folio pages, the last four chapters bear the sub-title 'De Adnichilacione,' and are devoted to proving that it is not in the power of God (*i.e.* is not in accordance with his nature) to annihilate anything.¹ Here, however, the orthodox doctrine of the Host has to be dealt with as an exception. If, as was generally held, the substance of the bread ceased to be at consecration, annihilation was taking place daily, and the denial of it was an open heresy. For a time Wyclif got over the difficulty by saying that "the substance of the bread is not annihilated, since its accidents remain, although it is changed as to its whole form."² Such subtle distinctions were not likely to disarm his adversaries,³ or to continue to satisfy his own inquisitive and logical mind. A curious account of the changes in his opinions is given by his opponent Woodford, writing after his death: "While the said Master John," he says, "was a sententiary⁴ at Oxford, and even a responding bachelor,⁵ he held publicly and in the schools that, although the sacramental accidents were in a subject, yet that the bread ceased to exist at consecration. And being much questioned as to what was the subject of those accidents, for a considerable time he replied that it was a mathematical body. Afterwards, when this position had been much argued against, he answered that he did not know what the subject of the accidents was, yet he asserted clearly that they had a subject. Now in these

¹ I have tried to read these four chapters, but have to confess that the double crabbedness of contractions and scholastic reasoning make me unable to follow a good deal of them. Dr. Shirley has given some quotations from them in the preface to the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*.

² *Substantia panis in eucharistia non annihilatur, propter remanentiam accidentium licet ipsa corrumpatur secundum totam formam.*—F. Z. lvii.

³ Among a list of heresies "*quas primo jactavit in aera*" is "*Quod Deus non potest annihilare creaturam.*"—F. Z. 2. Dr. Shirley says that this doctrine had been actually condemned by Archbishop Langham (F. Z. xxvii); but he quotes no authority, and I have not yet met with the statement elsewhere.

⁴ A student who had reached the period when he might lecture on the sentences, after which he might take his degree of B.D.

⁵ A B.D. of two years' standing.

articles and in his confession he lays down expressly that the bread remains after consecration and is the subject of the accidents.”¹ This account is no doubt substantially correct. Woodford’s view of Wyclif is that of a heretic cunningly preparing his way and gradually increasing in audacity. A more sympathetic observer will see in the same facts the signs of a gradual and irresistible change, due to logical necessities which he shunned facing as long as possible. Had he been a solitary student he might have shunned them all his life; but, exposed to the conflict of the Schools, he was driven to find an explanation, and was too honest to maintain any which did not satisfy his own mind. When pressed he could not but see that to speak of a mathematical body as a substance was a scholastic figment; and not less artificial was the explanation that the substance in which the accidents of the host existed was a quality or a quantity.² Arrived so far, the next step was to fall back on the language of the Bible, and assert that since the bread was said to be Christ’s body, the host was both bread and the body of Christ. This, however, was but the original statement of which the Church dogma was the explanation; the inevitable question was *how* the host could be both at once. Wyclif’s reply came in short to this, that the presence was sacramental; that in some special way, which he could not define but which was not dimensional or corporal, Christ was present according to his promise. He threw on his opponents the charge that they denied the host to be either bread or Christ’s body. Not bread, for its substance was gone, and all that remained was whiteness, roundness, etc.; not Christ’s body, for, though they said that the body was at every point of the consecrated wafer, they did not admit that it was the wafer, or that the visible whiteness and roundness were accidents of the body.

It seems probable that Wyclif began to maintain these views publicly at Oxford in 1380. He was at this time in the thick of

¹ F. Z. xv. note 4.

² Fratres autem prudenciores sustinent quod ista hostia consecrata sit nichil in forma nichili. Nichil quidem est, quia vel est quantitas ut dicant predicatorum, vel qualitas ut dicunt minores, vel aggregacio ex eisdem.—De Sermone Domini in Monte, c. 29, MS. T.C.C. 364*d*.

a controversy on the lawfulness of the religious orders, on sturdy begging, and on the duty of monks, imposed even by their rule, to labour with their hands.¹ Doubtless his opponents were glad to draw him upon ground where they were the champions of Church doctrine rather than of their own practice. He soon formulated his opinions and committed himself to three conclusions,² which afterwards formed the base of the Archbishop's condemnation. The Chancellor of the University, William Berton, was an old adversary,³ and seized his opportunity. He called together some doctors of theology and civil law, who unanimously condemned the novel teaching as heretical, and issued an order forbidding any one to maintain these assertions either in or out of the Schools. The condemnation was published in the School of the Augustines at the very moment when Wyclif was lecturing in support of his theses. He declared that neither the Chancellor nor any of those in league with him could alter his opinion, and appealed to the King.⁴ In reply, John of Gaunt came down to Oxford and ordered him to speak no more on the subject. Wyclif, instead of obeying, issued his Confession, in which he stated his position clearly.⁵ The University was in high excitement and a storm of pamphlets followed.

The Chancellor had forwarded a copy of his condemnation to the Archbishop of Canterbury, doubtless expecting him and the Bishops to take action in the matter; but in little more than a month Sudbury's head was struck off by the rebels on Tower Hill, and the see was vacant until November. Meanwhile within the University the controversy took a turn favourable to Wyclif. Probably this was due to the old-standing jealousy between the Seculars and the Religious. The quarrel, as we have seen, began with a discussion about the Orders, and the activity of the Monks and Friars may have driven their rivals to the side of

¹ Compare the account of controversies in F. Z. 239-241 with a poem printed in Wright's *Political Poems*, i. 253. A better text is given by Dr. Lechler, ii. 621.

² F. Z. 106.

³ F. Z. 241.

⁴ F. Z. 114. The writer blames him for appealing to the King instead of to "pope, bishop or ordinary." By the Statutes of the University his choice lay between King and Pope, all appeals to lower authorities being forbidden.—*Munimenta Acad.* 232.

⁵ Printed in F. Z. 115.

Wyclif.¹ Moreover Berton's action in inviting the interference of the Archbishop may have roused the ready jealousy of episcopal meddling. From these or other motives the elections for the next year were favourable to the Wyclifite party, and returned a Chancellor and proctors in their interest.

Things were not going so well outside, at least among the governing classes, who found much to perplex them. The itinerant preachers were going their rounds as usual, regardless of the Bishops' prohibitions, declaiming against the friars, who were not slow to reply. The people threw themselves into the quarrel, and every sermon was an occasion for debate if not for actual fighting.² At the same time a wave of reaction, due to the rebellion of the previous year, was passing through the gentry, leading them into a fierce repression of disorder. Still there was a strong body among the Commons who charged the late disturbances on the Friars,³ and it was probably in reliance on the support of this party that Wyclif when Parliament met laid before it seven propositions.⁴ In these he asserted that the King did not owe obedience to the Pope, that money ought not to be sent out of the realm to Rome, that cardinals and others should not be allowed to hold benefices without rendering due service, and that it was the King's duty to confiscate the temporals of delinquent bishops or clerics. Beyond this he maintained that since Church endowment is the property of the poor, it might be used for State needs to prevent excessive taxation. Lastly, that the King ought not to employ bishops or curates in secular work.

¹ Of twelve doctors consulted by Berton, six were friars and two monks.

² *Vix aliquis eorum prædicaret, quin ad pugnam inter se audientes provocarentur, et schismata in villis fierent.*—F. Z. 272. So too: "*Hoc anno (1382) fratrum elemosynæ subtrahuntur, mendicantes laborari jubentur, prædicare non sinuntur, denariorum prædicatores et domorum penetratores vocantur.*"—*Eulogium Hist. (cont.)* p. 355.

³ See the letter of the Mendicant Orders to the Duke of Lancaster.—F. Z. 292. Jack Straw was reported to have confessed that the rebels meant to destroy all the endowed clergy, and leave only the friars alive.—Wals. ii. 10. As a countercheck to this John Ball was said to have described himself as a disciple of Wyclif.—F. Z. 273.

⁴ "*Scribit ad dominos et magnates.*"—Wals. ii. 51. This may only mean that the propositions were circulated as a broadsheet or pamphlet among such of the nobles and gentry as were inclined to the Wyclifites.

Such a manifesto was sure to incense the orthodox party, and, if we may believe the writer of the *Fasciculi*, the Parliament pressed the Archbishop to make an end of these heresies.¹ Courtenay, nothing loath, summoned a Council to deliberate upon them. It met for business on May 21st² at the Dominican Convent (which stood where the *Times* Office now is, and left its name of Blackfriars to the neighbourhood), and unanimously condemned 24 conclusions as heretical or erroneous. Of ten denounced as heretical, the first three relate to the Eucharist, the remainder to Church government or endowment. The fourteen classed as erroneous deal with the power of prelates to excommunicate, the duty of preaching, and the uselessness of special prayers and religious orders. It will be seen that, as far as doctrine was concerned, the net was spread wide; since all the leading opinions for which Wyclif was notorious are enumerated and condemned. There is however no attack on him by name.

Meanwhile his supporters were busy at Oxford. On Ascension Day (May 15) Nicholas Herford preached a sermon in his defence, and another Wyclifite, Philip Repyndon, was appointed to preach on Corpus Christi Day at St. Frideswide. The orthodox party begged that this fresh scandal might be prevented, and the Archbishop sent down Peter Stokes, a

¹ "Milites et alii qui congregati sunt ex parte regni et parliamenti requirebant archiepiscopum cum suis suffraganeis ut finem facerent de talibus erroribus et hæresibus."—F. Z. 272. There is some reason to suspect that the author's wishes have coloured his narrative. Parliament met on the 7th, and the Council was summoned for the 17th, which shows rather an excess of promptitude in acting on the pressure of the members. But there is a stronger reason against accepting this version. To the acts of this Parliament on the Official Roll was appended one ordering the Sheriffs and other officers to arrest all wandering preachers at the request of the Bishop (Rot. Parl. III. 124b.). As soon as parliament met again at Michaelmas, the Commons prayed that this statute, to which they had not assented, might be cancelled. We may suppose that this entry was made by influential persons of the Church party to override opposition in the Commons. Courtenay needed no pressure to make him attack an old adversary.

² Dr. Lechler says May 19th, following Netter's narrative (F. Z. 272); but in the acts of the Council we find May 21, both in F. Z. (p. 288) and in the Lambeth Register. The same date, is given in Walsingham for the earthquake which took place while the Council was sitting.—Wals. ii. 66.

Carmelite and a headstrong opponent of Wyclif.¹ He arrived on the eve of the feast (June 4th) and presented his letters to the Chancellor. Next morning he was to proclaim the condemnation from the pulpit of St. Frideswide, and went to execute his commission, but he found Repyndon already in possession. The Chancellor was present in state, with the mayor of the town and an armed guard, while in the Church were some twenty men with arms concealed under their robes. Stokes, conscious that many errors remained for him to confute, did not yet desire martyrdom, so he sat trembling till the Chancellor and Repyndon had gone off together, and then slunk away. Next day he called on the Chancellor to verify his powers, and received an assurance that he should be helped in his task if the University would allow it. Stokes placed no faith in fair words. What would be done he could not tell, but he knew he was in danger of his life, and besought the Archbishop with tears not to allow him to perish.² A few days later (Tuesday, June 10) he mustered courage to dispute in the Schools in opposition to Repyndon, but even then he saw or fancied a dozen opponents with hidden weapons, and expected to have been slain before he could leave his chair. It must have been a relief to the timid inquisitor to receive, on the same day, letters recalling him to the Archbishop. Rigge, the Chancellor, was already in London, and at the second meeting of the Council he was called upon to justify himself. There is no reason to suppose that he really held Wyclifite opinions. He was one of the twelve Oxford doctors who condemned Wyclif's doctrines on the Eucharist when they were first broached,³ and

¹ The Lollard poet gives a description of him—

Tunc accessit alius, Stokis nominatus,
rufus naturaliter et veste dealbatus,
omnibus impatiens et nimis elatus
et contra veridicos dirigens conatus.
with an O and an I sub tam rubra pelle

animus non habitat nisi mixtus felle.—Lechler, ii. 631.

² Unum autem venerabili paternitati vestræ, si placet, notifico ; quod in hac causa nihil ulterius audeo facere metu mortis. Unde et flebiliter vestrum imploro præsidium ne occasione hujus causæ vel ego, vel socii mei, jacturam patiamur corporis atque vitæ.—Letter from Stokes to the Archbishop, F. Z. 301.

³ F. Z. 113.

his recent support of the Reformers, in which he was evidently backed by the University, was probably due to the corporate jealousy of the friars¹ and bishops. In the present case the University could count on support from neither King nor Pope and resistance to the hierarchy was unavailing. Rigge gave way at once. At the intercession of the Bishop of Winchester he was pardoned, and enjoined to prevent Wyclif and his followers from preaching or performing any scholastic act until they had purged themselves of the charges hanging over them.² He pleaded that he was afraid to execute the commission forced upon him, but his excuses were not allowed. His publication of the condemnation excited a storm of anger on the part of the seculars, who declared that the religious wished to ruin the University. The anger however was helpless, the corporate resistance of the University was crushed, and it remained only to deal with the individual offenders, who appealed in vain to the Duke of Lancaster, and were left to struggle hopelessly against the whole force of Church and State. In a few months all the Oxford leaders except Wyclif had been dealt with.³ Strangely enough, we have no account of Wyclif during all this time. Knighton indeed says that he appeared before the bishops in Oxford and recanted, but the text of the recantation, as given by Knighton, is a strong assertion of the original heresy;⁴ while the records of the Council which tell us all about the other heretics are silent as to Wyclif. It is to be

¹ The Lambeth Register gives a curious proof of the intensity of this jealousy. After Repyndon and Aston had recanted publicly before the Convocation which met at Oxford in November, Rigge, as Chancellor, accused Peter Stokes and two other friars of heresy. Their defence was that they had supported the false propositions only as a scholastic exercise. The Archbishop, "*videus gravem discordiam inter Universitatem et religiosos exortam fecit eos licet cum difficultate concordet, et dimisit eos in pace.*"

² Wyclif, Herford, Repyndon, Aston, and Bedeman are mentioned by name.—F. Z. 310.

³ Bedeman recanted Oct. 18th, Repyndon Oct. 23rd, Aston Nov. 20th. Herford disappeared, and most probably went to Rome and was imprisoned there by the Pope.

⁴ Höfler, *Anna v. Luxemburg*, p. 81, says that we may take the positive assertion of Knighton as to the recantation, and suppose that a wrong document was copied by mistake. One must have made up one's mind which way the facts ought to be to assert them on such authority.

noticed that throughout these transactions of 1382¹ he had been in the background, and it is possible that he had already retired to Lutterworth, but this alone would not have saved him at a time when his followers were hiding to avoid arrest. He once makes an allusion, which may possibly refer to this time: "I have pledged myself," he says, "not to use out of the Schools the term substance of material bread and wine."² This sounds as if he had been called to account, and had been dismissed on undertaking some formal conditions as to future controversy. But the form is not suitable to a man who was prohibited from all scholastic acts, and the passage may allude to the silence enjoined at an earlier period by the Duke of Lancaster.³

Why Wyclif was allowed to escape so easily is a puzzling question, and I cannot think that Dr. Lechler has accounted for it by the supposition that public feeling was favourable to him and prevented severe measures. More probably he had still powerful protection at Court, but if so it is curious that no chronicler makes any complaint of interference on his behalf. One last supposition is that he was already attacked by the paralysis which first struck him about two years before his death.⁴ Whatever was the cause of his impunity, it seems that the condemnation of his doctrines had no direct effect upon him, except perhaps in driving him from Oxford. Evidently neither actual nor threatened evils made him bate one jot of heart or hope. His doctrines had been condemned, his friends scattered and silenced, and he was worn with age and palsied, yet in the prosecution of his work neither courage nor energy failed him, and his literary activity during this last period of his life would have been wonderful even in a man of full strength. Tracts, Latin and English, came in quick succession from his pen, and, as if these were not enough to occupy him,

¹ We learn nothing of his doings from the narrative in F. Z. 272-333, and Repyndon and Herford are the heroes of the Latin poem already quoted.

² Trial. iv. 36, p. 375.

³ F. Z. 114, see above p. xxv.

⁴ "Iste Wycleff fuit paralyticus per duos annos ante mortem suam, etc." This passage comes from an account of Wyclif's death, given by Gascoigne on the authority of John Horn, who had been Wyclif's curate for two years.—Printed in Lewis, 336.

he gave in the *Trialogus* a complete and orderly summary of his doctrine, starting from the highest topics of abstract theology and coming down to details of doctrine and Church government. In his retirement at his quiet rectory of Lutterworth he could no longer exercise any immediate influence on the rulers of the country, but he watched with interest the course of events, and was strongly moved to indignation by Bishop Spencer's Flanders Crusade in 1383, an expedition as blundering in its management as it was immoral in the purpose and method of its undertaking. He recurs to it again and again, with an iteration which now at least is wearisome, sometimes dwelling only on the evils it had caused directly, more often on the scandalous traffic in indulgences by which money had been raised for its support. This enables us to date many of his later works, but otherwise there is little change to be noticed in him unless it be a more fixed and fervent conviction of the corruption of the Church and of the need of reform.

Outwardly his life was uneventful, but one doubt still hangs over the close of his career. It is commonly said that the summons to Rome, which fell through with the death of Gregory XI., was renewed by Urban, and that mortal sickness alone saved him from having to make his appearance before the Pope. A paper is extant which has always been taken for a letter to the Pope in answer to the summons.¹ Dr. Lechler remarks that this is not a letter, and is not addressed to the Pope, and that consequently we must reject the story of the summons.² I think he is clearly right in his premises; the form in which the paper is cast is certainly not such as would be adopted in a letter to the Pope; but I cannot follow him to his conclusion. The title given to the document in the *Fasciculi* shows that Walden believed Wyclif to have been summoned, and the letter itself reads to me like a justification of disobedience to the Pope's mandate, written for circulation in England. I incline to believe that Wyclif was summoned, and

¹ The English version is in S. E. W. iii. 504; the Latin in *Fasc. Ziz.* 341, with the title, "*Copia ejusdam literæ magistri Johannis Wycelyff missæ Papæ Urbano VI. ad excusationem de non veniendo sibi ad citationem suam, A.D. 1384.*"

² Lechler, i. 713 (English ed. ii. 284.)

further that he excused himself on the ground of illness, and received some support and protection from the King.¹ If the summons was issued about the time of the Council, it might partly account for Wyclif's escape from prosecution, since the bishops would not be concerned to judge one who was before a higher tribunal. Yet they would probably, as in 1377, be charged with the duty of sending him to Rome, and we should expect to find some notice of their attempting to execute their commission. On the whole it is most likely that a citation was issued in 1384. If so, the Pope had but little time to insist upon obedience. On Innocents Day, 1384, Wyclif was a second time struck with paralysis, while hearing mass in his church at Lutterworth. He lingered speechless for three days and died on Dec. 31st. His enemies saw a special judgment in his death on the feast of St. Sylvester, the Pope whom he had so often blamed as the first corrupter of the primitive Church.

In this sketch of Wyclif's life I have reserved one or two points for a more extended notice. First among these is his teaching as to "Dominion," important from the weight that he attached to it, and still more as having been the subject of more attack and misunderstanding than any other of his doctrines. His contemporaries accused him of using it to incite the populace to revolt and pillage, and the charge is still from time to time brought against him. Before attempting his defence I will try to make clear what the theory was, and in what form he upheld it.

The source and limit of Dominion was a question much discussed in the fourteenth century.² The claims of the papacy had been growing as its hold on the consciences of men was loosened. It was mainly upon religious and moral grounds that Gregory VII. rested in his quarrel with Henry IV.; his right of

¹ One of my chief grounds for this belief is Wyclif's tone in speaking of citations, which seems to me that of a man personally interested. To give my readers an opportunity of judging for themselves I have printed as an Appendix passages from two tracts in the Ashburnham MS.

² Es war die Eigenthumsfrage die brennende Frage der Zeit, die in tausendfacher Abwechslung immer von Neuem widerkehrte, gerade den scharfsinnigen wie auf die Besserung der Zeit gerichteten Mann unwiderstehlich anzog, sich mit ihr zu beschäftigen.—Constantin Höfler, Anna von Luxemburg, p. 20.

interference was based upon the crimes of the individual emperor rather than upon the general political supremacy of the Pope. No lofty moral or spiritual purpose could be ascribed to Clement VI. in his quarrel with Lewis of Bavaria, and the chief aim of the conditions imposed upon the prostrate Emperor was to secure a public acknowledgment of the subjection of the Empire to the Holy See. Nor were the claims of the Popes confined to the Empire, where a long quarrel might well have led to exaggerated demands. The secular lordship, which even in the eleventh century they had asserted over Spain, Corsica and Hungary, was now extended over a great part of Europe.¹ However shadowy their authority in these lands might be, the claim challenged criticism, and criticism had not been refused. The study of the Civil law had raised up a body of lawyers, who in scholarship and self-confidence held no unequal rivalry with the theologians. While Lewis of Bavaria was struggling with the Pope, a band of publicists, Marsilio of Padua, John of Jaudun, and William of Ockham, had maintained boldly and aggressively the divine origin and the independence of secular government. They found the Pope pretending to an authority over all Christians which, spiritual in its source and defended on spiritual grounds, was in practice constantly extended to worldly matters; and in reply they marked out jealously the limits of the spiritual power, they declared that lay rule was not only independent but also supreme in its own province, and that the property and persons of the clergy ought to be subject to its laws.

To these men, who wrote as avowed defenders of the Empire, the Emperor was the head and source of all secular government, and to him in their system accrued all the rights which they strove to wrest from ecclesiastical hands. But the Emperor was ill-fitted to bear the honour they laid upon him. He exercised only a nominal supremacy and that within comparatively narrow limits; while in a country that, like England, had

¹ On this point see Milman's *Latin Christianity*, B. xi. c. 7 (vol. vii. p. 13 of the 3rd edition). See also Dr. C. Höfler's *Die Avignonesischen Päpste* (Vienna, 1871) where it is strongly brought out.

never acknowledged subjection to him, discussions as to the translation of the Empire from East to West were futile. Yet some one must take his place; if not as the guardian of the world's peace, at least as the chief lord from whom all property must be held. Fitzralph,¹ if none before him, cut the knot by maintaining that God himself was the chief lord of all possessions, from Him every man held as far as any true rights of ownership were concerned, and to Him must do service. If he failed in this service, that is, if he fell into mortal sin, he forfeited his rights.² This is the doctrine of Dominion which Wyclif upheld, and which he is sometimes believed to have invented. Once received, it cuts short the old quarrel between Pope and Emperor, since it does away with the need of either as a fountain of secular authority. All rulers and owners hold direct from God as their *dominus capitalis*, who has delegated his powers to no vicegerent.

I have sketched the growth of this theory because it is only thus that we can see the object of those who first developed it. Whatever use the weapon might be put to later, it was forged to defend lay authority against the Pope. But it does not need much consideration to discover that, stated baldly, it might be employed to dangerous ends. When Wyclif says: "For he that standeth in grace is very lord of things, and whoever faileth by default of grace, he faileth right title of the thing that he occupieth and unableth himself to have the gifts of God,"³ his language easily lends itself to the malicious gloss of Rohrbacher: "Comme les partisans de Wiclif se donnaient pour des saints, et leurs adversaires pour des méchants, l'application était facile." Wyclif and his true disciples drew no such

¹ Richard Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh. Wyclif looked up to him as a teacher, and often speaks of him with respect (see *Triologus*, pp. 158 and 285). In the tract on Clerks Possessioners, p. 128 of this volume, he is called St. Richard, but I need hardly say that he never received the honours of formal canonization.

² *Omnis inobediens justis imperiis domini sui, in his quæ contingunt domini sui debitam servitutem, jus perdit omnium pro debito servitio a suo domino impensorum, et in illa forefacit: sed homo recepit dominium a deo pro præstando sibi debito obsequio: ergo inobediendo justis imperiis dei, mortaliter peccando, perdit dominium a deo sibi impensum, et forefacit illud.* Quoted from Fitzralph by Woodford, in his treatise against Wyclif (*Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum*, i. 237).

³ S. E. W. iii. 88.

conclusion from it. In the first place, as Dr. Shirley has pointed out,¹ he does not look upon dominion as a power, but as a habit or relation of the natural man. "There are," he says, "two titles by which a man holds temporal goods; the title of original justice and that of earthly justice. By the title of original justice Christ possessed all worldly goods, as Augustine often says; by that title—the title of grace—all things belong to the just; but civil possession has little to do with that title. Wherefore Christ and his disciples despised civil rule and possession, and contented themselves with holding only according to the first title."² Here we see that Wyclif brings civil possession into contrast with true dominion. It is with the latter, as an ideal, that he meets the ideal which ascribes to the Pope, as God's vicar on earth, the right of control over all earthly things, secular as well as spiritual.

From another side the doctrine had an ethical attraction for him, since it gave to the owner of property a higher sanction and motive for action than he could draw from merely human law. Thus he remarks that the King's right to rule does not allow him to follow only his own pleasure, since he is bound to observe the law of his chief lord, to the profit and advancement of his kingdom.³ In the artificial constitution of society in the fourteenth century no tie was reckoned as more binding than that of the feudal tenant to his lord. The doctrine of Dominion set up a similar obligation to God.⁴

We see then the main drift of the doctrine and its value to Wyclif. It cut at the root of the Pope's usurped power and gave to the layman freedom with increased responsibility. "But," it may be asked, "did not Wyclif go on to draw from it other and harmful corollaries when, after the full development

¹ F. Z. lxiii.

² Trial. iv. 17, p. 306.

³ Sed revera de rege, ut procuratore citra Christum, non sequitur: ipse dominatur hiis temporalibus, ergo licet sibi consumere ipsa quomodocumque voluerit: quia cum sit vere (?) peccabilis, habens super se capitalem dominum, oportet quod observet in expendendo sua temporalia legem capitalis domini ad augmentum et commodum regni sui, ut patet ex lege humana.—De Mandatis, cap. 25, MS. Univ. Camb. Ll. 5, 13.

⁴ Dicitur quod ratione sui proprii et veri domini verum est quod [Deus] non eget nostro servicio, sed nos econtra egemus ut serviamus pro habendo suo dominio.—Early Sermons, No. 19, MS. Lambeth.

of his opinions, he found Church and State united against him? When he appealed to the people in his tracts, did he not hold out to his followers the bait of a temporal reign of the saints?" He neither did nor could. Beside the distinction which, as we have seen, carried his theory into the ideal region, he put a practical obstacle in the way of those "too hasty heads for ordering worlds" who might have tried to make an ill use of it. While he taught that the man in mortal sin forfeited his dominion, he also taught that no one could tell what sin was mortal. For he did not, like the Roman Casuists, divide sin into the categories of mortal and venial according to the nature of each act; for him the only mortal sin was that of which the sinner was finally impenitent. The predestinate cannot sin thus; the reprobate (or, as he prefers to call them, the fore-known) will do so. But since his doctrine of predestination is not supplemented by one of assurance there can be no separation of sheep and goats in this life, where no man can know even what is his own state; much less what is that of others. "If the pope asked me," he says, "whether I were ordained to be saved or predestinate, I would say that I hoped so, but I would not swear it, nor affirm it without condition, though he greatly punished me; nor deny it, nor doubt it, would I no way."¹

Those who know how thoroughly Wyclif's doctrines are interwoven so as to form a consistent whole will see that there was no fear of his using this theory of dominion as a dangerous solvent of society, but we are not left to mere inference in this matter. Wyclif constantly asserted the duty of obedience even to wicked rulers, and it is curious that one paradoxical phrase in which he expressed this truth was brought against him as a heresy. "*Item quod Deus debet obedire diabolo*" was the seventh proposition condemned in the Council of London. The words sound strangely and are marked by the exaggeration of the Schools; but if we take obedience to mean the rendering of fit service, we shall see that it is only an emphatic way of saying that we must give to every one his due.² So Christ ministered

¹ S. E. W. iii. 426.

² See S. E. W. iii. 437.

to Iscariot, when he was a devil, and he submitted himself to Satan to be tempted. It follows that the Christian must subject himself to those who by God's ordinance and allowance are placed over him.

If we turn from principles to the manner in which Wyclif enforced them we shall find him perfectly consistent. So far as my knowledge of his works goes, there is only one passage which is open to misinterpretation on this point. It occurs in a sermon on the parable of the talents. "If thou ask who shall take away goods from these unjust men, since they be commonly mighty and no man dare take from them, Christ answers here and may not lie; this just man to whom God giveth heaven taketh from this unjust man that that him seemeth to have; and not by his own authority, nor by strength of himself, but by authority of God and by virtue of his law."¹ Taken by itself this quotation might seem to justify the good in depriving the wicked, but on reference to the context it is clear that Wyclif is insisting upon the ideal or spiritual possession, since he goes on to say: "And some men that shall be safe although they seem now poor, nevertheless they have now heaven and all goods of this world; but this having is now hid and yet unknown to man; for God's right is not yet put in possession."

The theory of Dominion is developed most in the Latin works, and finds little place in the popular tracts, but the latter contain many assertions of the duty of obedience to wicked men. I will content myself with one quotation, which is specially directed against those who misused the doctrine of Dominion. "But yet men doubt commonly whether men should pay their debts to these men that they know live in wicked life. And it seems nay, by reason of God, for such men ben unworthy to have any goods; yea to have life given of their God; how be they worthy to receive their debts? since they have lost title of all rightfulness. But here men think by God's law that men should stir such shrews to serve truly their God both by word and deed, and pay them their debts and hope for their

¹ S. E. W. i. 260.

amendment. For as God wills that they live, so he wills that men give (*i.e.* pay) them. And therefore teaches St. Paul, that Christian men that be servants serve well their heathen lords, by reason of their God. And so we grant well that such receive unjustly and to their damnation debts that men pay them, and yet their debtors meritoriously give these goods.”¹ The latter part of this passage sums up very shortly Wyclif’s belief. The wicked receive wrongfully, yet it is right we should yield them their worldly dues. The question of forfeiture is one to be settled with their chief lord, God, who will exact a strict account, and we have nothing to do with it.

I now pass to another characteristic doctrine of the Reformer, the sinfulness of endowments for the clergy. This, although distinct from the theory of Dominion, was closely connected with it. God, from whom all earthly lordship is derived, gives it all in fee to lay rulers and forbids the clergy to have any share in it. Wyclif appealed to the precedent of the Jewish law by which the priests were to have no inheritance in the land, and urged the example of Christ and his apostles who lived in voluntary poverty. It is a favourite saying of his, borrowed from Augustine, that as lay lords represent the Godhead of Christ in exercising the power which he has entrusted to them, so priests represent his manhood and are bound to follow his humility. There was nothing new in this, since it had been maintained long before by the imperialist writers. Moreover it was only a consistent application of ideas which were dominant throughout Christendom. The Church did not insist on poverty in her ministers, but accounted it a note of the higher life, a part of the vow of every regular. The monk’s rule allowed him nothing of his own,² the friar was for-

¹ S. E. W. iii. 175. See too the tract on Servants and Lords in this volume, especially p. 229, also S. E. W. iii. 147, “Moreover it were to wit, etc.” Among the Latin works where the duty is enforced may be mentioned the *De Sex Jugis*, printed in Dr. Lechler’s Appendix (ii. 601). This deserves notice because it is a tract compiled as an instruction to the poor priests.

² *Precipue hoc vitium peculiare radicitus amputandum est de monasteriis, ne quis presumat aliquid dare aut accipere sine jussione abbatis, neque aliquid habere proprium, nullam omnino rem, neque codicem, neque tabulas, neque graphium, sed nihil omnino.* —Rule of St. Benedict, xxxiii.

bidden a share even in corporate possession.¹ Wyclif would acknowledge no select higher life. Christ's rule was binding and was better than any that men could lay down, and since he taught poverty both by precept and example, the clergy was bound to follow his bidding and live on the free-will offerings of the people. In short Wyclif advocated a purely voluntary system, denouncing not merely state subsidies but all endowments. Like Dante² he traced the ills of the Church to the donation of Constantine, which Sylvester had sinned in accepting and which had since spread corruption through Christendom. The laity, who have sinned in heaping these fatal gifts upon the Church, are bound to withdraw them by wise and gradual means.³ The support appointed by God for the clergy is the tithe, and the payment of it is a duty so binding that it may be enforced by excommunication, always on the condition that the discipline is exercised for the good of the sinner and not for the greed of the priest. On the other hand if the pastor fails in his service, his flock should punish him by withdrawal of tithes, but this may only be done by orderly consent of the parishioners and not by individual caprice.

I can safely leave to others the task of criticizing Wyclif's plan for enforcing "wilful povert," but I may be allowed to remark that on this subject there was much excuse for extravagance. The wealth of the Church was the occasion, if not the cause, of such scandals as we now find it hard to imagine. Pluralists who held benefices by the hundred, Popes who sold their patronage openly, and prelates who knew nothing of their offices but their net yield, were the rulers of the Church.⁴

¹ See Rule and Testament of St. Francis (below, pp. 42 and 46).

² Inf. xix. 115. Par. xx. 55.

³ Wyclif's scheme, which provides some protection for vested interests, is to be found in the Trialogus, iv. 19 (p. 313). ✓

⁴ See Nicolaus de Clamengiis, *De corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu* in Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum, vol. ii. p. 555, etc. Here is his account of the pluralism of the Cardinals: "Quantæ illud aviditatis est, quod tantam multitudinem beneficiorum invicem repugnantium tenent? quod Monachi simul et Canonici sunt regulares et seculares? quod sub eodem habitu omnium religionum, ordinum, professionum, jura et officia beneficiaque possident. Non quidem duo vel tria, decem vel viginti, sed centena et ducentena, et interdum usque ad quadringenta vel quingenta aut amplius: Nec parva vel tenuia sed omnium pinguissima et optima," etc. (p. 559). In another place he says that no one nowadays in taking a cure of souls inquires into anything

What wonder if an earnest reformer longed to clear away the riches which seemed to be choking all spiritual life? I do not wish however to defend Wyclif's views but to explain them, and I am only trying to show that he does not step beyond the reasonable bounds of ecclesiastical politics. It is only by disingenuous devices of controversy that his advocacy of disendowment has been confused with his theories as to Dominion in order to represent him as a socialist and a leveller.¹

I have dwelt at some length upon these questions relating to property, because until they have been studied it is impossible to understand Wyclif's real position. Had his teaching been as dangerous and subversive as some writers represent it, we cannot suppose that he would have found favour and support with the statesmen of his time, and that not merely with one or two prominent men or at one particular crisis, but during twenty years of active life. Paradoxical as it may seem, I venture to say that one of Wyclif's most marked characteristics is his essential moderation. Even when his language is most vehement the thought and purpose beneath it are sane and reasonable. He indulges himself in heaping charges upon the prelates or friars who are for the moment the objects of his invective; they are spiritual manslayers, they are necromancers, they are ghostly adulterers and Sodomites; and as each fresh sin is added to the list, the accusation is justified with more or less logical ingenuity. These "ornaments to debate" are partly due to habits of paradox acquired in the Schools, and partly they are outlets for his fervid indignation. But if we go down to the kernel of thought, we find no wildness. Whether the question in hand be one of doctrine or discipline, Wyclif has considered it carefully both in principle and in its practical bearings. It is this characteristic that entitles him to his

but the amount of the income: "*Nec vero tantopere quaeritur, quanti sit præsenti homini et in Ecclesia rite servienti valor beneficii, quam quid suo possessori longius otia agenti, et perpetuo fortassis abfuturo, annuo proventu reddere valet.*" (p. 556). De Clamengis, it must be remembered, lies under no suspicion of heretical leanings. He was one of the many good men who lamented the abuses of the Church, but lacked courage to take part in any real reform.

¹ On the difference between endowments and lay property, see the tract *On Servants and Lords*, p. 229.

eminence as the first of the Reformers. Long before his time there had been heated sectaries who had denounced the whole system of the Church, but Wyclif was the first to submit it to a searching proof, to examine the prevalent practices and ask how it was they bent away from the ideal at which they ought to aim. In his conclusions he forestalled in many points the judgments of the more moderate reformers of the sixteenth century.

The note of a fanatic is that he cannot see that there is some soul of goodness in things evil; the institution or person that offends him is bad and must be swept away, and he would think it waste of time to inquire what accidental good it may do or to what use it was originally designed. Now it is a favourite practice of Wyclif to look back to the origin of the practice that he is discussing, and even in the act of condemnation he is ready to recognize occasional merits. Take for example this account of the ordinance of confession: "This confession that is made to man hath oft-times been varied in varying of the Church. For first men confessed to God and to the common people, and this confession was used in the time of the apostles. Afterwards men were confessed more specially to priests and made them judges and counsellors of their sinful life. But in the third time, since the fiend was loosed, Pope Innocent ordained a law of confession that each man of discretion should once in the year be privily confessed of his own priest, and added much to this law that he could not ground. And although this Pope's ordinance do much good to many men, nevertheless many men think that it harmeth the Church."¹ It is not enough to say that this passage is not fanatical; it shows a temper which is fundamentally opposed to fanaticism, and this is the more noticeable because it comes from a tract of late date and vehement tone. Again, on the subject of image-

¹ S. E. W. iii. 255. This is from a tract written about 1382. Compare the following passage "Nam quacunque hora quis peccaverit debet conteri, et *in tantum quo sibi proderit* . . . habita sacerdotum copia confiteri" (Early Sermons, No. I. MS. Lambeth). I give this passage, written when his views were less advanced, as showing the same principle and the same temper of setting the spiritual advantages above the formal rule.

worship and the adoration of saints, Wyclif, while opposing himself to the prevalent uses of the Church, spoke with reason and moderation. He denounced the waste of treasure on "dead stocks,"¹ but allowed that images were not forbidden to Christians, who may use them to excite devotion, and must always be careful not to adore the sign in place of the thing signified. If devotion is once paid to the image itself, or miraculous powers are attributed to it, it becomes an evil instead of a benefit, and thus the setting of one image above another is an act of idolatry.² Here we see how he tries to find a principle to judge by, and does not content himself with vague invective.

In treating of the adoration of saints, he shows the same spirit. No devotions to saints, he says, can be of any avail except so far as they honour Christ or excite men to love him, and since all gifts can be obtained only through his mediation, it seems to many that it would be better to pray directly to him.³ In accordance with this, we may notice that in the tract on the Ave Maria printed in this volume there is nothing said of invoking the help of the Virgin, although her example is insisted on, as might be expected from one who believed her to be sinless. Yet although he thus prefers prayer to Christ, he can scarcely be said to discourage those who find devotion to the saints profitable; but there is no indecision in his language as to the abuses which clustered round the worship of the saints; the treasure wasted on their shrines, the time thrown away on pilgrimage, the superstitious regard for relics.⁴ Most likely it was

✓ ¹ Below, pages 7 and 210.

² Et sic uni ymagini plus affecti quam alteri adorant ymagines, quod indubie est idolatria.—De Mandatis Divinis, cap. 15, MS Univ. Camb. Ll. 5. 13.

³ Trial. iii. 30 (p. 235). So too in the Dialogus, c. 14: Et videtur multis nulla oracio porrecta specialiter sancto Christi est laudabilis, nisi de quanto acuit devocionem in Christum, sic quod si omnes intenciones et omnes oraciones uniri possent in Christum, esset utilius Christiano omnes oraciones specialiter Christo porrigere.—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 104b.

⁴ It is to be noticed that even while he still upheld prayers to the saints, his views on these matters were decided. In a sermon preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, on the festival of the Assumption, in which he says that all human beings need to ask Mary's aid, he supposes that God may have removed her body, like those of Moses and St. John, to prevent the harm which would have come from worshipping it.—Early Sermons, XXVI. MS. Lambeth.

indignation against these abuses that led him to question the doctrines on which they depended.

These examples are enough to show Wyclif's temper and method, and it would be tedious and unprofitable to discuss in detail every point on which he differed from the dominant opinion of his time. Everywhere we find the same habit of judging forms and rites by their tendency to promote moral and spiritual aims; and since the Church of his time had become a mass of formalism, it was inevitable that he should find himself in opposition to its most cherished practices.

There remains yet one matter which I cannot pass over; Wyclif's opposition to the friars. Until lately it was supposed that his first public action was in opposition to the mendicant orders, that he threw himself into the lists against them at Oxford in succession to Fitzralph. Dr. Shirley first showed this to be an error, and Dr. Lechler has given quotations from some of Wyclif's earlier works which express respect for the friars, as following the life of poverty incumbent on all priests.¹ If we could rely on the authority of his antagonist Woodford, we should believe that it was only the opposition of the friars to his doctrine of the Eucharist which led him to attack them. This view has been accepted by Dr. Lechler, who dates Wyclif's first assault upon the friars in 1381, and thus throws the whole of the controversy with the Mendicants into the last three years of his life.² There is considerable authority for this view. Besides the statement of Woodford we have the information from a contemporary chronicler that in 1377 Wyclif, in disputing at Oxford against the possessions of the clergy, gave much praise to the Franciscan rule.³ In spite of this I cannot put the beginning of the quarrel so late. To go no further than the present volume, the tract *De Officio Pastoralis*, as I have shown in the head-note, is not later than 1378, and yet the friars are attacked in it without mercy. The use of the cant phrase

¹ Lechler, i. 586.

² In the English translation Dr. Lechler modifies this statement slightly. He says: "From 1378 we date a period of a few years in which Wyclif began to attack the Mendicants upon single points of error and abuse."—Vol. ii. 143.

³ *Eulogium Historiarum* (continuation), p. 345.

“cayms castels” for the friars’ houses is enough to show that the quarrel was already bitter.¹ We must not assume that any tract which does not refer to Wyclif’s sacramental doctrine was written before that doctrine was developed, but it is safe to say that, if the strife between him and the friars had been first or chiefly aroused by the Eucharistic controversy, it would have been mentioned in any long tract specially directed against them, yet we find no notice of it in the *De Pseudofreriis* (our No. XXII.). The same is the case in some of the Latin tracts² while in one, the *De Contrarietate Duorum Dominorum*,³ there is a very marked instance, since in the course of a fierce attack upon the friars Wyclif gives a list of seven heresies of which they are guilty, in which there occurs no mention of the Host. These considerations support the view which I have already expressed on other grounds,⁴ that at the time when Wyclif first declared his heresy as to the Sacrament he was in the thick of a controversy with the friars. I may add that the antagonism is not disproved by showing that Wyclif spoke with respect of the founders of the Mendicant orders. As we may see by the tract on the Rule of St. Francis (our No. III.), while he objected to all separate orders, what made him most wrathful with the friars was that they professed the poverty which was his own ideal but were untrue to their rule; nor is there any reasonable doubt that there were scandals enough among them to account for his hostility. If I may trust the impression made by reading a great deal of his invective, I should say that the abuses which most stirred his wrath were those connected with the various forms of indulgence and absolution; the sale of pardons and letters of fraternity, the offer of special prayers, and the claims of holiness for all admitted to the habit, even in the death agony. When and how his earlier good opinion was changed into dislike can only be a matter of conjecture, but such an effect may well

¹ This is found also in the Latin version of the tract, which Dr. Lechler assigns to 1378.

² *e.g.* *De Servitute Civili* (Shirley, 68) and *de Nova Prevaricantia Mandatorum*. (Shirley, 79).

³ No. 83 in Shirley’s Catalogue.

⁴ See above, p. xxv.

have been produced by his experience as a parish priest. Nothing can have been more trying to a parson who was doing his best to keep alive the flame of spiritual religion in his flock than the visit of one of these vagrant friars, preaching a catch-penny sermon, shriving men of sins which they were ashamed to confess to their own pastor, and generally encouraging the belief that a few easy benefactions to the convent would take the place of penitence and good life. I would not for a moment suggest that friars were always or even mostly of such a type, but very many such were to be seen in the villages. Jealousy once aroused was likely to be increased by the reports of Wyclif's poor priests, between whom and the friars there was a constant rivalry which often came to open quarrelling. If we take into account besides the permanent antagonism between regulars and seculars at the University, from the influence of which Wyclif can scarcely have escaped,¹ we shall find both public and personal causes enough to set him against the friars long before they led the attack on his sacramental doctrines.

We have now passed in review the most distinctive points in Wyclif's teaching, of which the main lines are clear even with our present materials, although many details cannot be settled until more of his Latin works are published. A natural curiosity leads us to turn from doctrines and opinions, and ask what the man was like. Portraits exist which are said to represent him, but of too recent a date to allow us to rely on their authenticity. From verbal description all we know is that he was thin and worn, and most innocent of conversation, and that he had a charm of manner which led men of the highest rank to delight in his society. Judging from his works it is rather difficult to discern in what the charm consisted. They are marked by learning and earnestness, and are occasionally relieved by touches of witty or humorous sarcasm, but they lack the strong personal stamp which wins our regard for Luther in spite of all his faults. Of Wyclif's own feelings, his inward struggles, his doubts and hesitations, we learn nothing; even

¹ We may trace it in his complaint that the friars monopolise books (pp. 128 and 221), which was made also by Fitzralph in his *Defensio Curatorum*.

when he tells us how he has changed an opinion it is in a quiet unimpassioned way as a simple relation of fact. Nor do we find in him what may be called the religious genius; the deep insight into spiritual things, the vivid sense of the invisible presences, which at times carries Luther, as it does St. Bernard or St. Theresa, into mystical rapture. Wyclif's piety is fervent and unfeigned, but never lifts him out of himself; his distinction is moral and intellectual—a moral energy which could not be satisfied with anything short of an ideal, fearless intellectual activity which proved all things, and shrank from no conclusions in an honest and devout search after truth. This preponderance of the intellectual and moral sides of his nature over the emotional accounts in some degree for the sense of hardness which we are conscious of in reading his works. When angered by a mischievous doctrine or an evil practice, he is apt to express and justify his indignation so freely that even his positive teaching seems to be tinged with polemic harshness. He was conscious of the defect, and tells us that he strove and prayed against it,¹ but it was to the end of his life too strong for him. Yet, whatever were his faults of temper, he must have possessed a singular attractiveness. No mere reputation for learning and intellect could have made him the adviser of the King, the companion of nobles, the head of a party at Oxford, and the adored leader of a band of faithful friends and disciples there and at Lutterworth. Not even the rancour of his enemies could impugn the blamelessness of his life, and the only sins they charged against him were pride of intellect and desire of distinction, accusations which no one can hope to escape who sets himself against the prevailing beliefs and customs of his time. He has however been blamed for cowardice by those who have accepted Knighton's very suspicious story of

¹ See a passage from the *De Veritate* quoted by Dr. Shirley, F. Z. xlv. Dr. Shirley speaks of 'a quick temper,' but what Wyclif acknowledges is that something of vindictiveness was apt to be mingled with his righteous anger. Another characteristic avowal is this: "*Omnes enim cogitamus superflue, quomodo vindicta caperetur de hostibus Christi atque ecclesiæ, et potius cogitamus imprecando istam vindictam quam alia media misericordiæ, quæ sic injuriantibus cederent ad salutem.*"—*De Sex Jugis*, Lechler (Appendix), ii. 603.

his recantation at Oxford.¹ Even apart from this he is said to have been shifty; speaking out his opinions vehemently and fully before his disciples and the crowd, denying, veiling, or minimizing them before authority. I do not think he is fairly open to censure on this point. No doubt, when put upon his trial, he explained away some of the charges brought against him. In his defence handed in to the Bishops in 1378 he says that some of the charges were founded on the reports of youths who had heard him lecture,² and even if the delators had by a singular chance been accurate, yet sentences detached from their context must sometimes have needed qualification. Yet any one who looks through his defence will see that in many cases he substantially upholds his original theses, and that so clearly that the Bishops would certainly have condemned him if they had been free to act. The pertinacity with which during the last years of his life he reiterated his most heterodox doctrines in all ways, in tracts and sermons as well as in formal treatises, shows that he did not shrink from braving the authorities of the Church. If we bear in mind how solitary he then was, without any party to encourage him by their applause or nerve him by their expectations, we shall wonder at his constancy rather than accuse him of faint-heartedness.

I need say little as to the character of the tracts which are printed here. In the short head-notes that I have prefixed to each I have tried to call attention to the salient points of interest, and to give my best judgment as to authenticity. I may however remark that while the book has been going through the press I have been permitted to use the volume of Latin Sermons in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and have

¹ Höfler tries to back up the accusation by the following quotation from the tract de Apostasia: "Sed protestor publice in hiis scriptis quod si aliqua persona ecclesiæ, etiam Robertus Gibbonensis (the Antipope Clement VII.) vel aliquis de suis complicibus, et multo magis si papa noster Urbanus VI. vel alius Catholicus de sibi fideliter adhaerentibus docuerit aliquam partem hujus sententiæ esse falsam, volo paratissime revocare."—Anna von Luxemburg, p. 81. Höfler treats this as a profession of obedience, put on to shield himself from the charge of pertinacious heresy and leave a way open to recant. Was there ever a reformer or innovator who did not express his willingness to recant if any one would teach him better?

² "Et quia per pueros reportata est sententia fidei, quam dixi in scholis et alibi, ac magis, per pueros etiam usque ad Romanam curiam transportata," etc.—Wals. i. 357.

read the Latin tracts in the Ashburnham MS., and the result of this increased knowledge of Wyclif's unquestioned works is to make me lean more to the side of genuineness than when most of the head-notes were written. A critic must have much more faith in his verifying faculty than I possess if he can hope always to decide with certainty whether a given tract was written by Wyclif or by one of his intimate associates, but I can safely affirm that the contents of this volume are Wyclifite if not Wyclif's; that they represent the views which he maintained, rarely if ever coloured by the exaggerations of the later and more violent Lollards.

It cannot be denied that there is a certain sameness which makes these tracts rather tiresome to read continuously. Yet any one who does so will be rewarded now and then by touches which depict, sometimes humorously, the manners of the time. The bad side of the friar is shown to us under many aspects; as a pardoner with stolen bulls and false relics (p. 154), as a pedlar carrying ornaments or pet dogs as presents to ladies who were sure to return his gifts with interest (p. 12), or, as he was more generally seen upon his rounds, accompanied by an "Iscariot" into whose bag was poured the produce of his sturdy begging, while he evaded the rule which forbade him to touch coin by counting it with a stick or wearing gloves (p. 49); or, lastly, he is presented to us as an interloping preacher, crying down the parish priest and tickling the ears of the people in the hope of a good collection (pp. 443-445). Elsewhere we catch a glimpse of the frivolous crowd that hung about the great prelates (as about other noblemen), dressed in the most extravagant fashions of the day, and swearing curious and profane oaths unmeet for the ears of their patrons (p. 38). Or coming to the parish priests we may see by the vices of which they are accused—drunkenness, lewdness, and gambling—that the prevailing standard of morals among them was low, since otherwise such reproaches would have been absurd and ineffective. It may perhaps be well to add that we must not look here for a fair picture of friars or secular clergy. Men like Wyclif whose mission is to make the crooked straight;

preachers, reformers, prophets, do not supply us with an impartial sketch of manners. The evils against which they strive engross their attention, and we can no more trust to their delineations than to those of a satirist, yet they are full of instruction to one who knows how to read them with due allowance.¹

Even on matters that are not ecclesiastical we have some notices of interest. The complaints of jury-packing (p 182), and perversion of justice (p 247), of extortionate taxation and seizure of goods in exchange for worthless tally sticks, of serfdom enforced unjustly (pp. 233, 234); all these show us how the weak had to suffer, and how much food was daily given to that fire of indignation which after long smouldering broke forth in the wild rebellion of the peasants.

I have yet to say a few words as to the purpose and plan of this volume. My object has been to complete the publication of Wyclif's English works. With this view I have printed all the tracts enumerated in Dr. Shirley's Catalogue that were omitted by Mr. Arnold, except when there is a strong balance of evidence against their authenticity. The exceptions are:—No 1. A collection of sermons ascribed to Wyclif only by a guess of Dr. Vaughan;² Nos 6-9. Commentaries on the Gospels and the Apocalypse, which are by a later writer;³ No. 11, parts 1 and 7, which are shown by Mr. Arnold to be by another author.⁴ With regard to No. 48, I think, with Mr. Arnold, that it is not Wyclif's, and I have left it out with less hesitation since it has been printed by Dr. Todd.⁵

Of the pieces that are printed here, "De Officio Pastoralis" and "De Papa" (Shirley 61 and 62) are undoubtedly genuine, but were out of Mr. Arnold's reach at the time his book was brought out. The rest of the volume consists of his leavings. On questions

¹ I am setting down truisms, but Mr. Arnold is so severe upon Wyclif for his onesidedness that I feel bound to apologize lest I incur the same condemnation.—S. E. W. iii. ix.

² See note in Shirley's Catalogue and S. E. W. i. p. iii.

³ S. E. W. i. p. iv. and Lechler, i. 440 (i. 334 English edition).

⁴ S. E. W. iii. p. vi. There are bits inserted, which may probably be by Wyclif. The piece will be edited for this Society by Canon Simmons among his Lay Folks' Catechisms.

⁵ Three treatises by John Wycklyffe, D.D., Dublin 1851.

of genuineness and interest, which have to be determined by internal evidence, it is impossible that any two students should be exactly in accord, and it is not for me to complain that the gleanings left for me are scarcely less worth than the harvest which Mr. Arnold gathered. Some of these tracts, *e.g.* "On Feigned Contemplative Life" (No. X.), and "On Servants and Lords" (No. XV.), seem to me to be above the average even of his third volume in interest.

As to the method pursued in editing, several tracts are from unique copies, and required only careful transcription and correction of the press. Where two or more MSS. gave me the opportunity of collation, I have not attempted to note mere differences of spelling, lest I should encumber the page with footnotes and references to an intolerable degree. Whenever it was possible I have kept the reading of the MS. which has served as groundwork, giving the alternatives in the note, and have corrected the text only where I thought there could be no doubt it was faulty. I have given in the margin the references for texts quoted by Wyclif,¹ but I have not tried to trace home his many quotations from the Fathers, etc.

In the notes I have adduced some parallel passages from the Latin works. It would have been easy to add many from the English sermons and tracts already published; but as my object was to show the resemblance of the text to Wyclif's authentic writings, I have drawn by preference from the Latin, as their genuineness is unquestionable. An additional motive for this course is that the Latin works are for the most part less readily available than the English, and for a similar reason I have taken as much as possible from MSS., in the hope that if my quotations should not seem to the point, their insertion may be excused by their intrinsic interest.

I must not omit to acknowledge the kindness which has made my work possible. For the loan of MSS. I have to thank His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Provost and Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Right Hon. the Earl of

¹ When the verse number is in brackets, *e.g.* Luke x. [7], the reference to the chapter is given in the MS.

Ashburnham. The use of the Ashburnham MS. has been doubly valuable to me, both as enabling me to add two important and authentic tracts, and as giving me an opportunity of studying the Latin tracts contained in it, many of them unique. The strict regulations binding on the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, do not allow of the loan of MSS., but I have much reason to be grateful to Mr. Lewis, the Librarian, for affording the utmost facility in the use of the MS. from which most of the tracts in this volume are copied.

I have also to thank Professor Atkinson of Trinity College, Dublin, and Mr. S. J. Herrtage for generous assistance, and especially my thanks are due to Mr. Furnivall, without whose encouragement my task would not have been undertaken, and whose ready helpfulness has been most useful to me throughout.

CORRECTIONS.

Page 8, l. 33	<i>for</i>	takis	<i>read</i>	talis.
P. 21, l. 1	„	wtt h	„	with.
P. 22, l. 19	„	pat	„	þat.
P. 30, l. 14	„	ʒritti	„	þritti.
P. 46, l. 25	„	þertyneþ	„	pertyneþ.
P. 80, l. 19	„	pouʒ	„	þouʒ.
P. 129, l. 1	„	leuyng	„	lenyng.
P. 218, l. 11, margin	„	Eccles	„	Ecclus.
P. 224, l. 28	„	þart	„	part.
P. 286, margin	„	Jod x. 9	„	Job x. 4.
P. 334, l. 5	„	disceyeud	„	disceyued.

P. 350, l. 13, *dele* full stop *after* hope.

P. 400, l. 8, *insert* comma *after* vermis.

P. 425, l. 33, *dele* full stop *after* dede.

P. 497. Note on *undren*. Canon Simmons has kindly sent me some quotations from "The Seven Canonical Hours of Prayer in the Anglo-Saxon Church," 1715, which show that undern originally meant *tierce*, however loosely it was used later. The word was growing antiquated in Wyclif's time. It occurs four times in the first version of the Bible, but is always omitted in the second.

WYCLIF'S ENGLISH TRACTS.

I.

OF THE LEAVEN OF PHARISEES.

WITH regard to this tract, as with many that follow, I can give no decided opinion as to authorship. I find it monotonous and poor in style, but in substance it contains nothing that may not be Wyclif's, while there is so much of his characteristic teaching that it must be by one of his intimate disciples if not by himself. The reference to Bishop Spencer's crusade (p. 8) shows that it was written about 1383. In some parts it very much resembles the Fifty Heresies and Errors of Friars, printed by Mr. Arnold, No. xxiv. Compare especially pp. 14, 15, with Chapter xvii. of the Fifty Heresies (S. E. W. III. 280).

There is a lively description in Chap. iii. of the tricks of the friars, which agrees well with Chaucer's description of his friar, whose

typet was aye farsed full of knyfes
And pynnes for to give faire wyfes.

The touch about their making friends with women by giving them pet dogs (p. 12) is, so far as I know, peculiar to this tract.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X., and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Christ commands us to flee the leaven of Pharisees, who belonged to a singular religion. The Religious of these days are like them.
- II. Proofs of hypocrisy. Their pride, envy, persecution of true preachers, covetousness, self-indulgence, and unchastity.
- III. How they offend against each of the Ten Commandments.
- IV. How they do the contrary of the works of bodily mercy.
- V. How they do the contrary of the works of spiritual mercy.
- VI. How they fail in Faith, Hope, and Charity.
- VII. The duty of exposing their wickedness.
- VIII. Cowardice and falseness prevalent among all classes. Faults of priests.
- IX. Faults of Lords.
- X. Faults of Commons.
- XI. The faults of the Religious are much the worst.

Attendite a fermento phariseorum quod est ypocrisis
Lucæ, 12^o.

Capitulum primum.

Christ's com-
mand to flee
the leaven of
Pharisees,
who were men of
singular religion,

and enemies to
Christ,

so that Christ
called them
hypocrites, and
cursed them.

Exceptions.

Religious orders
are like the
Pharisees.

They are not
founded or sanc-
tioned by Christ.

Sufficiency of
holy writ.

They are under
suspicion of hy-
pocrisy.

Crist comandij to his disciplis and to alle cristene men to vndirstonde & flee þe sowrdow of pharisees, þe wiche is ypocrisie. First pharisees been men of synguler religioun founden of synful men, biside þe ordynaunce of god þat is tauzt in holi writ. And yn cristes tyme þere weren þre sectes of ordres founden of mannys ordinaunces, as pharisees, saduces and esseis. of two þe firste mathew spekeþ in his gospel. And of þe þridde spekeþ þe maister of stories. The firste two weren grete men of name and hauynge, and weren stronge enemyes to crist & his lawe, and disceyueden þe peple by ypocrisie, & weren ful coueitous. And þerfore Seint Joon baptist & crist clepede hem ypocritis & serpentis and addir kyndles, & jhu cursede hem ofte, 3ee eiȝte tymes, as þe gospel seiþ. But crist louede & sauede summe gode men of hem, as nicodeme & poul, & brouȝte hem out of her ordris to fredom of þe gospel & distroied þese ordris, as holi writ seiþ. And ȝif oure newe religious ben in þese same synmys, as ful of coueitise & ypocrisie, & stryuen aȝens þe fredom of þe gospel & cristis lif & his apostlis, þei ben cursid of god; and þei shullen be brouȝt out of here ordris maad of synful men & brouȝt clenly to þe gospel & fredom of cristis ordre, for it is most perfit & most esi to wyne heuene by & most sikir, for þe most myȝt, most wisdom, & most charite of jhu crist þat made it and made nouȝt þise newe ordris. And ȝif þei hadden be needful or profitable he wolde haue maad hem by hym silf or by his apostelis, or teld in holi writ bi what man & what tyme þei shulden haue come in; but nouȝt of al þis is founden in holi writ, in wiche is al nedful and profitable ordynaunce of holi chirche; & þerfore al þis nouelrie of ordris is suspect of ypocrisie & luciferis pride and blasfemye

of antecristis ypocrisie. last men doon þis nouelrie for vein glorie & for getyng more plentifousli of wordli godis bi abite & oþer sygnes of holinesse; siþþe þei myȝten lyue as plesandeli to god & as moche profit to holi chirche, and fulli ocupie al þe myȝtis boþe of soule & body be þat clene religioun þat crist made hym self to his disciplis & prestis as bi þese nouelries maad of ydiotis & synful wrecchis of lucifers pride; for þei ben taken as holier men & holden hem self more worþi for þise newe ordinaunces of her owen fonnyd heuedis, þat letten hem from þe better ocupacioun,¹ *þan for clennesses of cristis ordre, þouȝ þei seruen² neuere so perfitly crist in holy lyuyng and trewe techyng wiþoute þis newe professioun and cermonyes, þe whiche crist and his apostlis diden neuere ne tauȝten in al holy writ. It is a fendis pride a synful creature to putte defaultte in þe ordynaunce of crist, seiynge in word or dede þat crist tauȝte not his disciplis and his prestes þe beste ordre and religioun, but lefte þe beste ordre bihynde a þousand ȝeer and more til sathanas was vnbounden to desceyue men bi lesyngis and ypocrisie, and siþen crist made and tauȝte þe beste religioun, it is a stynkyng pride of luciferis children to leue þe betre, and constreyne men to leue þe betere, and take and nedē men to holde for þe þe worse. Of blasphemye, for þes newe religious seyn in word or dede þat crist myȝt not, coude not,³ or wolde not teche cristen men þe beste religion to wynnē heuene by; and ȝif þis be soþ crist was not god, for þanne he was oute of charite. And in þis same þei seyn priueily þat a synful ydiot was more⁴ wis and fullere of charite þan ihu crist, siþ bi hem þis synful ydiot ȝaf and vsed a betere religioun þan euere dide crist god almyȝty. ypocrisie is a fals feynyng of holynes whan it is not in trewþe bifore god, and so ypocrisie is fully contrarie to crist, þat is trewþe as þe gospel techeþ, and it is comunly þe moste perylous synne of alle. For comunly an ypocrite doþ neuere verrey penaunce, for trist þat he has

They pride themselves more on keeping their ceremonies than on serving Christ.
*[p. 2 MS. Corp.]

They imply that Christ's teaching was defective,

and thus that he was not God.

Hypocrisy most opposite to Christ, who is truth.

¹ Up to this point is copied from AA, as the text in X is illegible from damp.

² suwen AA.

³ omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

Hypocrites the
worst thieves.

in his owen holy feyned lif and for likyng of veyne glorie and for wynnynge of worldly goodis; and ypocritis ben most cursed before al oþer þeues, for þei ben þeues of goodis of grace and dysceyuen oþer men in goodis of vertu, þat ben betere þan goodis of fortune or goodis of kynde, and as a þing is betere so þe mysusyng þer-of is more dampnable, as lyncolne and oþer clerkis prouen; and þerfore crist in þe gospel cursid so ofte ypocritis more þan oþere synful men.

Capitulum 2^m.

Tests of hypo-
crisy:

See now wheþer oure religious þis day ben ypocritis.

pride in worldly
goods,

þif þei bynden hem self bi herte, word and sygnes to moste mekenesse after crist and his apostelis, and þit ben most proude of worldly goodes, of beaute, of welschap, of strengþe of body, of connyng, of worldly and fleschly frenschipe, of kyn, and of holynesse *of here singuler religion, þan ben þei moost cursed and synful ypocritis.

*[p. 3 MS.]

boasting of
special holiness,

þif þei maken hem self in sizte of peple more holi¹ þan oþere men and bosten þereof in owtward signes or wordes, as mornynge abite, lettris of fraternite, þat crien here holynesse and synguler deuociouns bifor men, and bihynde ceesen of; and do þis for worldely wynnynge and veyn glorie, and preisen more here owen longe preieris þan oþer mennus,² þei ben þan foule ypocritis.

envy among
themselves and
hatred of true
teachers,

¶ þif þei bynden hem to most charite and þer wiþ ben in gret enuye amongis hem self, and han dispitt and indignacion of good lyf and trewe techyng of cristis gospel þat symple men don out of here ordre, þes ben perilous ypocritis and cursed of god for defaute of charite.

delight in mis-
chief done by
others,

þif þei ben glad of here enemys myslyuyng or techynge, to lette þer-by men to teche freliche goddis lawe, þei ben cursed ypocritis.

þif þei bynden hem to most pacience and mercy and þer

¹ omitted X.

² The MS. contraction-mark is that for *-us*, though 'mannes' occurs on p. 30, l. 22, and in the first two sheets at least, all the other noun flexions, except this 'mennus' (or 'mannus') are in 'is,' 'ys' or 'es.'

wyþ haten and ben woode wroþ *with* men þat trewly dispisen synne and reþrouen here ypocrisie, and pursuen hem cruely and *with* out mercy þat frely and sadly techyn þe gospel and þe comaundements of god wherby here symonye and ypocrisie is more knowen of þe peple, þanne þei ben cruel ypocritis.

persecution of
those that preach
the Gospel,

ʒif þei pursuen trwe men for techyng of þe gospel, and seyn þere wiþ þat þei pursuen hem for errours þat þei seyn openly to þe peple when þei lien & falsly sclaundren trewe men, but þe pursuyt is maad for prestes techyng men where þei schullen do here almes to here moste nedy neiþbores after þe gospel; þan be þei *cursed* ypocritis.

¶ ʒif þei maken prelatys and lordis, bi here fals flateryng and lesyngis in confessions and preuei conseils, to lette prestis to preche goddis lawe and to lette þe peple to knowe and to kepe þe comaundementis of god, lest freris ypocrisie and wynny[n]g be stoppid and þe peples almes betere spendid, þanne be þei *cursed* ypocritis.

encouraging
lords to stop
preaching of the
Gospel,

¶ ʒif þei come in to þe chirche to holde and meyntene þe pouert of crist and his apostelis and bynden hem þer to, and þer *with* ben most coueitouse abouten worldely goodis, summe aboute temperal almes nedles and summe aboute worldely lordyschype, bi ypocrisie and lesyngis and flateryngs, þei ben þan trecherous ypocritis and perilous enemys of crist and his chirche.

covetousness
under pretence
of poverty,

*¶ ʒif þei maken profession to most hey pouert and to be deed to þe world and worldelyþingis, and wiþ þis stryuen nyȝt and day who of hem may bilde gaiest wast housis and costly places, as chirchis or castelis to herberwen lordis inne and ladyes, and beggen of pore men þer-to þat han nouȝt to lyuen by ne here children, þei ben perilous ypocritis and dysceyuen riche and poore.

building of gay
houses,

ʒif þei ordeynen ydiotis to ben lymytours þat best kunnyn begge, and holde goode men and kunnyng in holy writt fro prechyng, and disceyuen men bi pardons, lettris of fraternite and priuat preieris for to geten worldely muk more þan soule helþe, þanne be þei fals ypocritis and worschipen false maummetis.

deceiving men
by pardons and
letters of fra-
ternity,

luxury in houses,
vessels and food,

neglect of
preaching,

studying law
instead of holy
writ,

indulgence in
rich food,

Phil. iii. 19.

encouraging
lords in oppress-
ing their tenants,

fornication and
adultery,

*[p. 5 MS.]

sodomy.

The devil brings
together such
'lumps' of

¶ ȝif þei bynden hem to *traueile* faste and techyng of þe gospel frely, as *crist* and his apostelis diden, and her-wiþ ordeynen costly chambris and beddis and siluerene vessel and gay cloþes and costly mete and drink, as knyȝttis, barouns or erlis, and *prechyn*¹ not but onys or þries in þe ȝeer bi-fore grete lordis and comuntees for veyn glorie or worldely wyunnyng, þei be þanne ypocritis at þe fulle.

ȝif þei traueilen faste in *aristole*² and newe sophymes to ben clepyd maistres, and þan traueilen not in holy writt but veyn pleies & corioustees, and excusen hem her-bi fro preiynge and rysynge at mydnyȝt, þei ben ypocritis; for þei don not goddis *seruyce* in hem selfe but drawn oþere men þer-fro.

ȝif þei bynden hem to grete penaunce and abstynence of mete and drynk and þer-of bosten to þe peple, and here-with seken lustys of costly metis and drynkis, and bien hem derrere þan lordis don, and dwellen in courtis with lordes and ladies to feden here bely faat, and leuen here deuociouns of cloistre, þei ben foul ypocritis, for þei maken here stynkyng bely here false god as seynt poule seiþ.

¶ ȝif þei plesen lordes and ladies in synne and counforten hem to don extorcions to here pore tenauntes and to meyn-tene false causes for to haue lykyngis of here foule wombe; þei ben wickid ypocritis and robberis of poore men and traitours to lordes and ladyes.

¶ ȝif þei bynde hem self to clene chastite boþe of body and soule and of dede and wille, and here-wiþ don fornyacioun and auoutrie wiþ wyues and nonnes, and slen wommen þat with-stonden *hem in þis synne; þei ben foule ypocritis.

¶ ȝif þei don þe cursed synne of sodom wiþ hem self, and seyn to nyse wymmen þat it is lesse synne to trespase with hem þan with oþere weddid men, and vndir taken for þe synne of þe wommen, and norischen ryche men and wymmen in lecherie and in auoutrie for monye and to haue here owne lustis; þei ben cursid ypocritis and distroien cristendom. It semeþ þe deuyl gedreþ sicke lumpis of ȝonge men, fatte

¹ omitted X.

² Aristotile AA.

and lykyng and ydyl, and byndiþ hem fro wyues, þat men myȝten haue bi goddis lawe, to maken false heiris and to for-do þe kynde of men and so make þe erþe cursed of god and alle his seyntis. And þus þei ben ypocritis moste dampnable bi-for god.

young men to increase adultery.

¶ ȝif þei seyn þat þei ben most holy and best men of religion, and þer wiþ lyuen in most pride, most enuye and wraþe, in most coueitise and ydilnesse, in most glotone, dronkenness, or surfet and leccherie.¹

Capitulum 3^m.

See now where þei breken falsly alle þe comaundementis of god. ȝif þei chesyn to be reulid more after þe ordynaunce of synful men and ydiotis þan after þe clene ordynaunce of crist, and seyn þat synful mennus ordynaunce is betere and sikerere for men and more perfit þan is þe clene ordynaunce of crist; þei worschipe false goddis and ben heretikys and blasphemys; and so þei breken þe first maundement of god. ȝif þei dreden more and ponyschen more for brekyng of synful mennes contradicions þan for comaundementis of god cursedly broken, and studien and louen more here priuat reulis þan þe hestis of god, þei worschepen, louen and dreden more synful men, and in caas dampnyd deuelis, þan god almyȝti. for as austyn seiþ a man makiþ þat þing his god þe whiche he dredid most or loued most.

How they break the Commandments.

I. They worship false gods by setting men's orders above Christ's.

¶ ȝif þei chargen men more to seke blynde stockys or ymagis and to offre to hem more þan to pore bedrede men and more þan to charge goddis hestis; þei worschipe false goddis. for þouȝ a man breke goddis hestis þei wole soone and liȝtly assoile him, but ȝif he make a vow to a blynd pylgrymage or to sende his offryng to sicke a stok; þat schal not be dispensid wiþ but reserued to a grettere satrap. And in þis þei chargen more þe brekyng of a folie a-vow of synful men þan þe brekyng of goddis *hestis; but wheþere is more ydolatrie?

They set more by deuotions to images than keeping God's commands.

Pilgrimages.

*[p. 6 MS.]

¹ Probably there should follow "þei ben cursid ypocritis," unless the preceding clause is to be taken as part of the sentence. But in both MSS. it is distinctly marked off.

II They swear falsely to draw children to their order.

Letters of fraternity and indulgences for the crusade.

They undertake to get souls out of purgatory for money.

Luke vi. 46.

Matth. xv. 8.

Prov. xxviii. [9.]

Isaiah i. [15.]
Mal. i. [10.]

III. They use the holiday to preach fables and to beg.

They draw people to church to admire the windows, etc., and not to repent.

¶ Ȝif þei sweren in veyn and many false oþis to bigile ȝonge children to here veyn religion, sweryng þat it is þe beste; who takiþ þe name of god in more ydelnesse and more dispitt? Ȝif þei taken þe charge to ben trewe vikeris or seruauntis of crist and þer-wiþ taken vpon hem falsly þat þinge þat is reserued to god only, as to make men *partyners* of here medeful dedis, and to graunte hem þe blisse of heuene and pardon to slee cristen men for to meyntene worldely lordschip and coueitise of þat prist þat schulde be most meke, most pore, most redy to dye for cristen *mennus* soulis; who takiþ more cursidly þe name of god in veyn?

¶ Ȝif þei vndirtaken to brynge soules out of purgatorie bi here preiers and here to receyuen myche gold or rentis, and þer-wiþ lyuen in pride, enuye and oþere grete synnes; who takiþ more goddis name in veyn, and more cursidly disceyueþ cristen men? ¶ For crist seiþ to siche men in þe gospel of seynt luk: What seiþ ȝee to me lord! lord! and don not my comaundementis; and in þe gospel of matheu seiþ crist þat siche ypocritis worschipen him wiþ outhen cause; and by salomons bok seiþ god þat his preiere is cursid and abhomynable þat *turneþ* a wey his eris þat he here not goddis lawe; and also bi þe prophete ysaie and malachie and austyn and gregory and many moo.

¶ Ȝif þei maken hem besi on þe holy day to preche fablis and lesyngis to þe peple and not þe gospel, and gon fro place to place and fro man to man to begge of pore men for here false lesyngis, and letten men fro here deuocioun; þei kepen not wel here holiday. ¶ Ȝif þei drawen þe peple in þe holiday by coryouste of gaye wyndownes and colours and peyntyngis and babwynrie fro conpuncion of here synnes and fro mynde of heuenely þinges, and fede riche men wiþ pore *mennus* goodis, wiþ costly metis and wynes and wast spicerie to glotonye, dronkenesse, lecherie, and weiward takis, and suffren pore men hungry and þristi and in gret mischef; þei kepen euyl here holyday and letten oþere men to kepen it. ¶ Ȝif þei studien on þe holy day aboute experymentis or

wiche craft *or ¹veyn songis and ¹knackyng and harpyng, ^{*[p. 7 MS.]}
 gyternynge & daunsynge & opere veyn triflis to geten þe They go to
 stynkyng loue of damyselis, and stere hem to worldely dances to meet
 vanyte and synnes; þei breken foule þer holyday and ben young women.
 procuratours of þe fend.

¶ Ȝif þei worschipeu gretly here singuler patroun and dis- IV. They set
 pisen god þe trynite and ihū crist oure goode fader, when their patrons
 þei putten his lawe and his ordynaunce bihynde; þei above God, who
 worschipeu not here fadir after goodis lawe. Ȝif þei louen is their father,
 more here singulere congregacion þan þe comynthe of cristen and their order
 men, þei worschipeu not but dispisen owre modire holy above their mo-
 chirche. Ȝif þei drawen parischenes fro obedience and loue ther, the Church.
 & ²sacramentis of here gostely fadris for here owne wynnyng, They draw away
 as in confessioun and beriyng & heryng ³of massis for parishioners
 offryng; how worschipeu þei and techen opere to worchipe from their spi-
 here gostli fadris? Ȝif þei drawen children fro fadir and ritual father (the
 modir and maken hem of here singulere religioun, þat þei curate).
 may not susteyne here heldris lif be þei neuer so feble and
 pore; how worschipeu þei god and techen childre to leue þe
 maundement of god and to suffere fadire and modir to perische
 for feyned obydience to synful mannus tradiciouns? certis
 þis ilke fals religious is guilty of þeste and manquellyng
 also, siþ he is cause of þe old pore mannus dep.

¶ Ȝif þei haten and sclaudren with false lesynges trewe men V. They hate,
 to techen frely holy writt and repreuen synne, and namely slander, and per-
 ypocrisie, and falsly pursuen hem to þe dep, þei slen hem, secute true
 and ioon þe euangelist seiþ as to here dampnacion. Ȝif þei preachers.
 conforten men to slee here breþren in false werris, by open ¹John iii. 15.
 prechyng or preuei conseilyng, or vndirtakyng for false They encourage
 domesmen þat slen innocent men for coueityse or enmyte men to slay their
 whanne men ȝeuen hem myche tresoure; þei ben false breþren in war.
 menquelleris and most gyltif of alle.

¶ Ȝif þei letten curatis and pore prestis to techen men goddis They hinder true
 lawe bi sotil ypocrisie and sleiȝtis of anticristis lawe, for preaching,

¹⁻¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ omitted X.

and so commit soul-murder. drede lest here ypocrisie be parceyued and here wynnynge and worldly fame leid a-doun; þei ben cursed manquelleris, and gylti of dampnacion of alle þe soulis þat perischen for þe defaute of kunnyng and kepyng of goddis comaundementis.

VI. They preach for praise and advantage, and so are ghostly adulterers.
*[p. 8 MS.]

¶ ȝif þei prechen principaly for worldeli muk or veyn glorie, and so prechen here owne sotiltes to be preised of men, and not *symply and pleynly þe gospel of crist for his glorie and sauynge of mennus soulis; þei don gostely lecherie bi goddis word as poul seiþ.

They set philosophy above Holy Writ.

¶ ȝif þei seyn and meyntenen in scole and oþere placis þat þe wordis of holy writt ben false and manere of spekyng of newe idiotis is trewe, þei don gostly auoutrie and putten falsnesse and blasphemye vpon god; for in þat þei seyn þat an heþene filosofre or a newe synful caitif is wittiēre and trewere þan almyȝti god, ȝe þat god is fals and a fole and þes heþene blasphemēs and newe dremeris ben trewe and witti.

Under colour of physic they commit adultery.

¶ ȝif þei feynen hem sotil of fisik and knowynge of wymmenys complexcion and preuyte, seiynge þat sicke siknesse or deþ schal com to hem in absence of here housbondis but ȝif þei haue mannus helpe, and þus defoulen on and oþer; þei breken foule þis comaundement þat biddiþ men do no lecherie; and in þis poynt men dreden þat þes pharisees geten hem moo holderis vp for here putrie þan for here trewe prechyng or holy lyf.

They visit wives when the husbands are away.

¶ Whanne lordis ben fro hom in werris, in iustis and parlementis and in dyuerse lordschipsis, and whanne marchauntis ben out of lond or in fer cuntrees for here marchaundise, and whanne plowmen ben al day in þe feld at here plowȝ ore medes; þan þes pharisees presen faste to here wyues vnder colour of holynesse.

VII. They steal children to recruit their order.

¶ ȝif þei stelen mennus children, boþe gentyl mennus and pore, to make hem of here synguler ordre þat is maad of synful men and confermyd, & in cas of¹ deuēlis and not of god; þei don cursed þefte aȝenst þe seue[n]þe maundement of

¹ omitted X.

god. for many men ben drawen, bi lesynges and ȝiftis and so by symonye, fro þe betere ordre to þe werse and maad more cursed and deppere dampnyd in helle. For þouȝ children ben brouȝt be lesyngis, symonye and fals bihestis in-to þis feyned ordre bifore tyme of discrecion and ben not able þer-to, ȝit þei schulle be nedid bi peyne of dampnyng in helle, as þei seyn, and bi drede of bodely deþ to holde forþ þis feyned religion aȝenst here conscience and freedom of þe gospel. and he þat most steliþ children to þes priuatis Wickedness and mischief of child stealing. ordris is most preised of þes cursed congregacion, and þat is a cursed reward. For he þat steliþ an oxe or a cowe is a þef and gretly *peyned bi mannus lawe; myche more owiþ *[p. 9 MS.] he to be ponynschid boþe of god and man þat steliþ his owne child, þat is betere þan alle worldely goodis; and here-bi ben gentil mennus heiris distroied, and so lordis and also laboreris and sumtyme trewe prestis and curatis ben made beggeris and lesyngmongeris to destruction of londis. ȝif þei techen wyues, prentis, seruauantis and children to stele They teach dependents to steal for their benefit. fro here housbondis, maistris and fadir and modir and ȝeuen it to þes pharisees, as hildegar seiþ, þei ben perilous þeuys Hildegar. to make discencioun among manye. ȝif þei feynen hem nedy They feign poverty to get alms, and pore whanne þei ben ryche and proude, and beggen of þe pore peple, and maken men to wene þat þei schulden haue more þank of god to ȝeue here almes to riche possessioners or oþer ryche pharisees þan to ȝeuen it to here pore neiȝbores as crist biddiþ; þei ben foule þeuys, for þei robben þe almes and so rob the poor. ȝeuer boþe of feiþ, of worldely catel, and pore bedrede men of here liflode.

¶ ȝif þei putten on here pore breþren þat lyuen wel and VIII. They accuse true reprouen hem of here synnes þat þei wolden distroie holy preachers of religion, and here-fore disceisen hem and putten hem in wishing to de- prison, and sumtyme morþere hem aȝenst goddis lawe and þe kyngys; þei beren false wyttensse aȝenst here neiȝbore, and ben cursed manquelleris. ¶ ȝif þei beren on pore prestis þat techen þe trewþe of þe gospel and þe goodenesse of cristis and holy church. ordynaunce þat þei wolde distroie holi chirche, and here-fore

pursuen hem to þe deþ and maken prelatys lordis and comunes to do also; þei beren false wittnesse, and ben manquelleris and irregulere bifore god and traitouris to god and alle holi chirche. ȝif þei pursuen to þe deþ pore freris serabitis, þat kepen fraunseis reule and testament to þe riȝte vnderstondynge and wille of fraunseis wiþ outen glose of antecristis clerkis; þei beren false wyttenesse aȝeyns here patron and ben caynis breþren þat killyd his broþer fore his goode lyuynge. ȝif þei seyn þat cristis lawe is not ynowȝ and þe beste to reule holy chirche, but lawis of proude coueitouse and worldly clerkis ben nedful and betere, and stryuen aȝenst goode men þat techen þe goodnesse and excellence of cristis lawe and his ordynaunce and declaren þe falsenesse and ypocrisie of worldly prestis newe lawis; þei beren false wittnesse and ben traitours to god and stynkyng blasphemers.

Prelatys
They persecute
friars who keep
the rule,

and so bear false
witness against
Francis.

*[p. 10 MS.]
IX. They covet
lands and endow-
ments.

*¶ ȝif þei coueiten vnresonabiliche þe housis, þat ben goodis vnmeble of here neiȝeboris as londis or rentis, or perpetual almes of coffris, siþ þei bynden hem to pouert of crist and his apostelis, þei breken þe neynþe maundement of god.

X. They seduce
wives and
maidens.

¶ ȝif þei leden a-wey mennus wyues or wenches in here newe habitis, to do lecherie bi hem as hem liste, þei breken þe laste comaundement. ȝif þei maken wyues and oþer wymmen hure sustris bi lettris of fraternite or oþere iapes, and geten children vpon hem to make hem freris or nunnes to holde vp here veyn sectis bi lordischipe, þei coueiten euyle here neiȝbores wyues and wenchis; namely, ȝif þei waiten hem in feldis alone or gardyns and sleen hem þer by keruyng to moche vsynge of lecherie. ȝif þei becomen pedderis berynge knyues, pursis, pynnys and girdlis and spices and sylk and precious pellure and forrouris for wymmen, and þerto smale gentil hondis, to gete loue of hem and to haue many grete ȝiftis for litil good ore nouȝt; þei coueiten euyle here neiȝeboris goodis.

They become
pedlars that they
may get large
gifts for small.

Make presents
of lap-dogs.

They become
cake-sellers.

¶ ȝif þei ben made wafreris, ȝeuyng lordes, ladies and riche men a fewe peris, appellis or nottis to haue huge ȝiftis to

þe couent, euyl þei coueiten here neȝeboris goodis. ȝif þei
meyntenen men in extorscions, in robberie, in false sweryng They maintain
men in oppres-
sion
to sille ouer dere þer marchaundise and bie to grete cheep
of pore men, and in lecherie and grete synnes, vndirtakyng
for þes cursed men at domes day for part of wynnynge; þei
coueiten euyle here neȝeboris goodis; for þei dysceyuen here
soulis herfore to euere dampnyng in helle. and ȝif þei
breken þis, and worse alle þe comaundementis of god; þei
ben perilous ypocritis and disceyuen foule cristen men to
meyntene goddis traitors principaly. ȝif þei geten hem
worldly offis in lordis courtis, summe to ben stiwardis of They take secu-
lar office under
lords,
halle,¹ summe to ben kechene clerkis,¹ summe to ben lordis
anyneris, and summe to ben conseilours and reuleris of werris,
and also to bein chamberleyns to lordes and ladies, and putten
out pore gentil men of here office, and forsaken here cloistre and leave their
cloister.
and oþer deuociouns for to haue lykyng of mete and drynk
and cloþ and worldly worschipe, and to sende a grett quantite
to here couent þat pore bedrede men schulden haue; *þanne *[p. 11 MS.]
þei ben ypocritis, enemyes of pore gentil men² and traitours
of pore men and of lordes and ladies.

Capitulum 4^m.

See now where þes religious don aȝenst þe werkis of mercy They offend
against the works
of mercy.
1. Bodily.
boþe bodili and gostely. ȝif þei wasten delicat metis and
drynkis and ȝeuen nouȝt to pore men of here owene secte ne They eat richly,
but do not feed
the poor.
oþere þat ben in gret nede, but drawen pore mennus almes
and liflode to here owne couent þat haþ to moche of worldly
goodis, to make festis huge to lordis and ladies and riche
men of contres; þei feden not pore men but robben hem of
here liflode, and so ben manquelleris bifore god.

¶ ȝif þei feynen hem to be men of abstynence and grete They drink ale
and wine,
penaunce, and þer wiþ drynkyn dilicious ale and spisid and
heiȝe wynes, and beggen of þe comune peple to holden vp

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

his realte, and zeuen lordis and ladies þes swete drynkys for
 and leave the poor to perish of thirst. to magnyfie þes sectis, and suffren here owene breþeren boþe
 wiþ inne and oute to perische for þrist and myschef; þei
 zeuen not drenk to pore þristi men but raþere drawen here
 sustynaunce fro hem vndir colour of holynesse, and so ben
 worse þan comune þeues and outlawis, for þei take fro riche
 men and parte oft wiþ pore men.

They have rich
 clothes,
 and do not share
 them with the
 poor.

¶ ȝif þei gederen to hem self many wast and precious cloþes
 bi feyned beggerie and sotil ypocrisie, and partiþ not with
 pore nedy men þat han nakid sidis and torne sleues and here
 children steruen for cold, neiþer here owen breþeren, be þei
 in neuere so gret myschef & cheueren for cold, hou cloþe
 þei nakid men, whanne bi ypocrisie þei drawen fro hem þis
 bodily almes bi whiche þes poralis schulden be cloþid and
 kept fro deþ. certis þei ben cursed disceyueris boþe of pore
 and riche, and ben irreguler bi-for god for myschefous deþ

They have great
 houses and en-
 tertain lords and
 ladies, but give
 no shelter to the
 poor.

þat þes nedy men suffren. ȝif þei han grete waste houses
 for to resceyuen lordis and ladies, ȝe to soiorne among hem
 daies and ȝeris, and oþere riche men nyȝt and day, and helpen
 not pore nedi men with hereberwe in þo grete placis as
 kyngis paleis, but raþere drawe pore mennus goodis fro hem
 to þes waste placis, hou receyue þei pore men to herberwe?

They get the
 means to build
 by encouraging
 rich men in sin.

namely, whanne þei disceyuen riche men in makyng restitu-
 cioun of extorcions and euyl geten goodis, and suren hem
 of al perel ȝif þei maken sicke costly houses and wast paleises
 to men *þat haue forsaken alle worldly ioie and pride and
 taken cristis mekenesse and gret pouert bi wilful profession.
 it semeþ þat þei ben preuy enemys of pore men and dis-
 ceyueris of riche men and schlaunderis of crist puttyng on hym
 sicke worldly pompe and ypocrisie.

Use of the big
 churches.

And ȝif þei seyn þat grete chirchis ben worschipful to god
 and lykyng for þe peple to serue god inne, axe hem what
 charite it is to laten parische chirchis fallen doun for defaute,
 where þe peple schulde heere goodis worde, goddis seruyce,
 and resceyue here sacramentis, and to maken newe chirchis
 as castelis wiþ ouden nede; and wheþer crist preied most in

Decay of parish
 churches.

*[p. 12 MS.]

þe nyȝt in hillis, as þe gospel seiþ, and tauȝte mychel þe peple in desert and in þe wilde felde, and seide þat þe heiȝe temple schulde be distroied for þe synne of prestis þat weren þer-inne. And seyn þat lucifer and adam *serueden* not god in heuene ne paradis as þei schulden, but iob *seruede* wel god in þe donge hille and adam also in þe valey of wepynge, and so dide crist in þe hillis, and þe prophete danyel in þe deen of lyonys. and þouȝ men suffreden resonable cost of chirchis whi schulde þei suffre so grete cost of kechenes and ȝate housis and wast chambris for lordis and ladies and riche men, and a frere to haue a chambre for an erl or duk or a kyng whanne he is bounden to þe pouert of crist, siþ þis cost is geten bi beggen of pore men and disceit of riche mennus almes. ȝif þei visiten not pore men in prison for charite of god and sauynge of soulis, bute riche men in here prosperite to han part of here worldly goodis, hou don þei werkis of mercy? for sumtyme for enuye and hate ful trewe men ben sett in prison, and þanne it were most nede to conforte hem in bodi and soule aȝenst defaute of mete and drynk and cloþ and grucchyng aȝenst god or dispeir; but it is worse ȝif þei be ypocrisie and false beggyng reuen fro pore prisoneris þe almes þat þei schulden ellis haue.

Waste on offices
and guest rooms.

They visit the
prosperous,

but not poor
men, wrongly
put in prison.

¶ ȝif þei visyten not pore men in here sikenesse but riche men wiþ preue massis and placeboes and dirige, þouȝ pore men ben neuere so deuout and han neuere so myche nede to ben amendid of here lif, hou seken þei þe helpe¹ of soule? but only or principaly worldly muk or auauntage. where helpen þei sike men of bodely almes, þouȝ *þei hem self han *[p. 13 MS.] neuere so muche wast of mete and drynk, but raþere in siche tyme þei gedren fro sike men al þat þei may.

except to get
gifts.

They bury only
the rich.

¶ ȝif þei ben faste aboute to haue riche men biried in here housis for wynnynge and offryng and worldly meyntenaunce and forsaken pore men to be biried þere, þei ben false ypocritis, traueilyng in coueitise and pride and þefte, for þei drawen riche men fro her gostly fadris and here owne

¹ helpe AA.

parischenys, and so departen in tyme of deþ curatis and here gostly children.

They persecute
poor priests,

¶ ȝif þei pursuen pore prestis to prison and bodily deþ, as hangynge, drawynge or brennynge, for þei techen trewely and frely þe gospel of ihū crist and techen men wiche ben false prophetis and ypocritis, siþ holy writt spekiþ of siche- and biddiþ cristen men knowe hem bi here opyn werkis and flee fro hem; þanne ben þei perilous ypocritis and heretikis aȝenst goddis worschipe and sauynge of cristene soulis.

and put true
men in prison,

¶ ȝif þei þursuen trewe lige men of þe kyng to endityng falsly and wyttyngly for þei reprouen here open synnes, hou visiten þei men in prison? siþ þei drawe trewe men to prison to loos of catel and deþ wiþ outen resonable cause.

They bring up
poor men to
judgment for not
giving what they
promised.

¶ ȝif þei drawen pore husbondemen to dom for þe bi-heȝten þem almes sumtyme and now ben tauȝt to ȝeuen here almes to pore neiȝeboris aftir þe gospel, or þat may not now paie so gret almes for pouerte and myschif þat þei ben inne, hou don þei þe werkis of mercy? siþ þei don opynly aȝenst charite.

Capitulum 5^m.

Failure in works
of spiritual
mercy.

They preach fa-
bles instead of
Christ's gospel,

put special
prayers above
the Paternoster.

teach men to
care for wealth,

See now where þei failen in werkis of gostly mercy. first ȝif þei techen opynly fablys, cronyklis and lesyngis and leuen cristis gospel and þe maundementis of god, and ȝit don þei þis principaly for worldly wynnynge, frendschipe or veyn name þei don aȝenst þe chifwerk of gostly mercy; nameliche ȝif þei techen þat here singuler preiere is betere þan þe pater noster þat crist made him self, and þat preiynge bi lippis is plesaunt to god þouȝ mennus lif þat preien be cursed of god for brekyng of his hestis and defaute of charite.

¶ ȝif þei counseilen men to be bysi a-boute worldliche richessis more þan a-boute here soule helþe and þe blisse of heuene, and conseilen men more to taken vengauce bi open werre of here breþren þan to suffren paciently wrongys and

haue mercy on oþer neiȝeboris; þei don foule *aȝenst þe *[p. 14 MS.]
 secunde werk of gostly mercy, to dampnacion of many men
 boþ of body and soule. ȝif þei conseilen men to leue þe ^{advise entering}
 fredom of cristis ordre and take here singuler ordre maad ^{into religious} orders,
 of synful men, seiynge þat it is þe beste for hem vp peril
 of here soule; þei don aȝenst þe charite for loue of here owne
 worschipe or wynnynge and blasphememen aȝenst god, makynge
 hem self as witti as þe holy gost. siþ it is reseruyd only to
 þe holy gost to ȝeuen ful conseil of þingis þat [ben] not
 expresly comaundyd ne defendid in holy writt, and þei taken
 þis þinge vpon hem whanne þei ensuren to men þat it is best
 for hem to be men of priuat religion. and also þei conseilen
 sumtyme euene aȝenst þe sterynge of þe holy gost, and maken
 men dispeire dampnyd for schrewidnesse of þis ordre and of
 men þer-inne, for þer-by þei lasten more and ben more hardid
 in synne and ypocrisie.

¶ ȝif þei chastisen not here breþeren for grete synnes, so þat ^{punish open sins,}
 þei be preue, but ouerscharply ponyschen hem for smale ^{and not secret} ones,
 synnes þat ben open and make hem seme vnholly to þe world;
 þei failen foule in werkis of charite and ben false ypocritis.
 and ȝif þei chastisen not here breþren for opyn sweryng
 veynly and pride and inpacience and false coueitynge of þer
 neiȝeboris goodis, but for litil trespasyng aȝenst here owne ^{punish more sins}
 statutis or customys; þei failen in dwe chastisyng of synne, ^{against the order}
 for þei chargen not dispit or trespas don aȝenst god, but aȝenst ^{than against God,}
 here owen worldly worschipe and name of holynesse.

¶ ȝif þei conforten not pore men in here myschif boþe of ^{visit the rich and}
 soule and body but suffren hem perische for dispeir or defaute ^{not the poor.}
 of bodily goodis, but raþere visiten hem in here prosperite
 for worldly muk; þei failen fully in werkis of charite and
 mercy to here breþeren. ¶ ȝif þei gon gladly and faste to lordis ^{They go gladly to}
 housis and ladies þat ben gloriously araied, and deynen not ^{fine houses, but}
 to come in pore mennus houses for stynk and oþere filþe; ^{shun those of the}
 hou suen þei charite? siþ crist sparid not to visyte pore men ^{poor for their}
 in a foul stynkyng stable and cold, and in þe colde greue ^{stink and filth.}
 and in helle, and in many foule weies in þis world, boþe in

gret hungur and þrist and gret werynesse and cold and
muche sclaundrynge and cursyng and oþere peynes ynowe.

*[p. 15 MS.]

They bear malice
longer than any
other men.

¶ ȝif þei wolen not forȝeue litel trespase don aȝenst hem self or
feyned seyntis of here singuler secte but moste cruelly
*pursuen men þerfore; þei forsaken pacience and mekenesse
and ensauple of cristis lif. and men dreden þat enuye,
rancour and euyl wille dwelliþ lengest amonges hem of alle
oþere men, be þei lordis, be þei prelatis, þouȝ þei ben men
of armys; but where is falsere holynesse, and so foulere
ypocrisie? for þouȝ a man speke aȝenst a lord, clerk or prelat
he schal sonere be reconsilid be weie of mekenesse þan to
newe feyned religions; for þei wolen pursue to deþ or open
schame, and ȝit vndir colour of holynesse.

They will not
bear reproof.

¶ ȝif þei soone lesen pacience and bringgyn men out of
pacience þat speken aȝenst here ypocrisie and euyl dedis;
hou don þei werkis of mercy, siþ þei schulde be here meke-
nesse and pacience bryngyn oþere in-to reste and pees of
body and soule. ȝif þei profren gentil men and oþere to
fiȝte wiþ hem whanne þei reprouen hem of here opyn wyckyd
dedis, hou ben þei ensauple of crist and his apostelis to
saue oþere men in reste and charite? it semeþ þei ben fendis
children to stryue aȝenst þe treuþe, and meyntene syn and
brynge oþer men to helle bi procurynge of fiȝt and lesynge
of pacience and charite.

They are re-
vengeful.

¶ ȝif þei cursen and warien and pursuen here enemyes and
axen vengauunce of god aȝenst hem; hou suen þei charite of
crist þat biddiþ men to loue here enemyes, and don good to
men þat haten vs, and to preie for hem þat falsly chalengen
vs and falsly and wickidly pursuen vs? ȝif þei don þus and
welle werse aȝenst þe hestis of god and werkis of mercy boþe
bodily and gostly, þei ben foule ypocritis and not worþi but
to be putt out fro cristen men and defoulid, and not worþi
to be putt in þe erþe, þat is to haue þe leste office in þe
chirche.

Capitulum 6^m.

See now wheþer þei faile in feiþ, hope and charite. 3if Their failure in faith, hope, and charity.
 þat o part holdiþ wiþ o pope and þe toþer wiþ o noþere pope, and eche partie seie and techiþ as bileue þat þis pope Some support one pope, some another, yet they communicate together.
 is verray and noon oþere, and alle þat bileuen not so ben cursed heretikis out of bileue; þei ben alle out of bileue and bryngen alle oþer out of bileue; and 3it þei comunen togidre boþe partis as cristen men, and so þei seyn o þing and don þe contrarie as ful false men. 3if þei techen opynly and meyntene þat þe¹ bileue þat crist and his apostelis tau3ten is not þe best and ynow3 to brynge men to heuene, but lawis maade of worldly prestis ben nedful and betere to reule holy chirche bi; þei erren foule *in þe feiþ and *[p. 16 MS.] blasphememen crist god and man. 3if þei seyn, written and techen openly þat þe sacrament of þe auter þat men seen bitwen þe prestis hondis is accidentis wiþ-uten suget and neiþer bred ne cristis body; siþ holy writt seiþ þat it is breede and cristis precious body, þei ben cursed heretikis. They teach that the sacrament of the altar is only accidents,
 3if þei putten on² crist þat he beggid as þei don fro toure to toure and fro hous to hous wiþ open cryeng; þei erren foule that Christ begged as they do.
 in þe feiþ and putten errour vpon crist. 3if þei disceyuen They deceive men by false pardons.
 men in feiþ bi fals pardons, bi mannus preiere, bi letteris of fraternyte and bi here feyned roten abite; þei ben false prophetis hauynge þe likenesse of holy religion and distroien cristis religion, as poul seiþ. and so³ of signes of anticrist, of fiftene tokenes bifore domes-day, and of veyn nouelries wiþ-uten noumbre as to men.

3if þei hopen to plese god more bi kepynge of here owne tradicions and singuler obedience and profession to synful wrecchis, and maken oþere more⁴ sikyrly to hopen þus, þanne for kepynge of cristis gospel and trewe obedience, eche man to oþer in þe drede⁵ of crist as crist and his apostelis diden, þei failen foule in good hope. They have more hope in their own traditions than in Christ's gospel.

¹ here X.² of X.³ omitted.⁴ more is inserted in AA by a corrector.⁵ degre X.

¶ ȝif þei louen more fonnyd ordynaunce of men þan ordynaunce of ihū crist, ȝif þei seken more here owne worschipe þan worschipe of god, ȝif þei setten here hertis more aboute worldly muk þan aboute vertuous lif and þe blisse of heuene and sauynge of cristen soulis; þei failen foule aȝenst charite and alle opere vertues. þis men myȝten schewe bi seuene ȝiftis of þe holy gost, bi myspendynge of fyue wittis, bi sixe consentis of synne, and colourynge and meynthyng of alle synnes preue and apert, and namely bi false procuryng of matrymonye bi soteltees and queyntese and false bihetynges, and fals dyuors makynge, hou þes newe feyned religious ben anticristis, sent preuily of þe fend to disceyue men in gostly goodis and worldly, and norischen hem esily in synne, and dryuen hem to helle to euerlastynge deþ. and þerfore comaundiþ crist þat we be war and flee fro þe ypocrisie of pharisees.

They seek their own praise more than the praise of God.

They make false divorces.

Capitulum 7^m.

Luke xii. 2.

Christ bids us speak the truth boldly.
*[p. 17 MS.]

Luke xii. 4.

And [Christ] seiþ þat þer is no þing keuerid þat ne it schal be schewid, and þere is no þing hid so priue þat it ne schal be wist and knowen. for þo þingis þat ȝe han seyde in derknessis schullen be seid in liȝt, and þat þing þat ȝe han spoken in ȝoure couchis or smale beddis schal be prechid in þe roof of housis. Here crist meniþ þat men schulden be war and oppynly telle þe *trewþe aȝenst þis ypocrisie; for þouȝ it be now hid it schal be schewid at þe laste at þe day of dom. ¶ And also cowardise of cristis disciplis, ȝif þei spare for bodyli peyne and deþ to telle openly þe¹ trewþe of goddis lawe. And þerfore telliþ crist after to his disciplis þat þei schulden drede god and no þing ellis souereynly. Sopli seiþ crist: I sei to ȝow, my frendis, þat ȝe ben not agast of hem þat sleen þe body and haue² no þing more³ to do after þes þinges; but I schal schewe ȝou whom ȝe owen to drede. drede ȝe hym souereynly, þat after þat he haþ sclaȝn

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

þe bodi, haþ power to sende boþe bodi and soule to helle wth outen ende. so, I say to ȝow; drede ȝe him. here crist wol þat men drede no þing principaly but god and his offence. for ȝif men dreden bodili peynes and deþ, and þerfore ceessen to telle openly þe treuþe, þei ben wiþ þis vnable to resceyue þe blisse of heuene; and ȝif þei seyn openly and sadly þe treuþe of god, no þing may harmen hem so þat þei kepen pacience and charite. ¶ And herefore seiþ crist aftirward to conforte his disciplis bi reson: ne be not fyue sparwis sold for an halpeny, and on of hem is not forȝetyn ¹ Luke xii. 6.

bifore god; but also alle þe heris of ȝoure heuyd ben noumbrid, þerfore nyle ȝee drede; ȝe ben of more pris þan many sparwis. as ȝif crist menede and made þis reson: siþ god

almyȝty takiþ so gret kepyng of smale briddis þat ² on ³ of hem, ȝe þe ⁴ leste, is not forȝeten, how myche more schal god kepen ȝow; siþ he is almyȝty, alwytti, and al ful of good wille, & þere may no þing come wth outen his wittyng and his ordynaunce, and it is al for þe beste. ¶ And no þing may aȝenstonde, so þat men takyt paciently and þanke hem þerfore; and whanne þe heris of oure heuyd ben countid þat þei may not be lost, where we may be lost oþere in bodi or soule, siþe eche of vs is betre þan þe heris of oure hed. as ȝif crist seide þat no þing of vs, nere of bodi ne of soule, may perische ne suffre peyne to oure harim, so þat we kepen pacience and charite. at þe laste word crist makeþ vs siker to dye for his lawe bi reward of þe blisse of heuene, whanne he seiþ þus, þat eche who euere knowlechiþ me bi-for men, ⁵ Luke xii. 8.

and mannus sone schal knowleche hym bi-fore þe angelis of god. here crist clepiþ hym self mannus sone, for he is þe sone of þe ⁶ vergyne marie, and so a persone of mankynde, þat is clepyd a man bi speche of holy writt. and knowlechyng ⁶ is seid here fore verrei knowlegchyng ⁶ of crist, boþe in herte

God takes care of little birds and will let nothing happen to us but for the best.

bi saad feiþ þat he is verrey god and verrey man wth outen synne, & alle degrees, in þouȝt and speche and dede and alle circumstauncis þer of, and witnessyng in word þe treuþe of

How we must acknowledge Christ.

¹ forȝeuen X. ² þan. ³ or X. ⁴ omitted X. ⁵ omitted X. ⁶⁻⁶ omitted X.

*[p. 18 MS.] þe gospel, hou crist lyuede most mekely and most porely and most *vertuously* bi-forn alle *opere* men as þe gospel techeth; and knowlechyng in lif, lyuyng after þe lawe of god and in *wille to die *þerfore* ȝif it be nede; þis *verrei* knowlechyng schal make men to ben approued of crist at þe day of dome, biforn alle þe compayne of angelis and seyntis and good creaturis and euyle, hou þei were *verrei* wittnesse of crist in erþe bifore men, and in fulwille to suffre sclandris pursuyng and bodili deþ for þe loue of ihū crist and his lawe.

Capitulum 8^m.

Here may men touche þe cowardise and fal[s]nesse of *prestis*, lordis, *marchauntis* and alle *opere* men þat failen in charite anemtis god and his lawe. where ben þo *prestis* þat maken hem so bisy aboute grete benefices, wordly worschipsis and styngyng muk or drit of worldeli richesse, þat þei wolen travaille¹ gladly nyȝt and day in lordis courtis, in worldely offis, for litel cost takyng of þe lord in hope of benefices; and so bisily pat vnneþis may þei at reste seie metenes or masse *with* deuocioun. *opere* *prestis* rennen out of oure lond ouer grete sees and þoruȝ londes of enemyes in peril of here lif, in gret cold, *hungur*, þrist, stormes and tempestis, þat it is wondir hou þei may lyue; but hou bisi maken þei hem self and *opere* to lerne, kepe and teche goddis lawe? *certis* but ȝif þei more bisily lerne bi grete *traueile* and studie holy writt, and kepen it trewly in here lyuyng, and openly to ȝeue good ensauple to alle men, and *prechen* it sadly and trewly *with* als myche *traueile* and more, and ȝit it be nede ben wilful to die *þerfore*, þei may drede ful sore þat þei ben out of charite and out of feiþ, but ȝif it be ded feiþ as fendis han; for þei *traueilen* more for worldly worschipe and styngyng drit þan for loue of god and helpe of mannus soule.

Are they priests who care only for worldly rewards? They do secular work in hope of a benefice. They take gold out of the land

And ȝit, þat is werse, þei beren gold out of englond, and

¹ omitted X.

sumtyme it comiþ to oure enemys and þer-bi þei ben which goes to our enemies.
strengyed aʒenst vs, and bi takynge of prisoneris of oure
nacion, and sumtyme oure enemys killen many of oure lond
þorouþ sicke traueile for benefices to gret reprof of oure
rewme. And ʒif þe gold¹ come to rome, þer-bi ben benefices
of þe chirches bouʒt and sold. ¶ For who so may most gold Benefices sold at Rome.
brynge sunnest schal be sped to grete benefices, þouʒ he be
vnable boþe of kunnyng and lif, and able men of kunnyng
and lif ben putt bihynde; summe for þei willen not chaffare
by symonye, and summe bi bisinesse of studie and techynge
of holy writt, for þei² wollen neiþer dwelle in lordis courtis
ne renne to rome wiþ þe kyngis gold. and ʒif gooddis lawe and
mannus and reson ben wel souʒt þis chaffarynge wiþ suche
benefices and gold is symonye on boþe partis; and so heresie,
as þes lawereris written openly in here owene lawe. And These Rome-runners change gold for lead. * [p. 19 MS.]
þus þes rome renneris beren þe *kyngys gold out of oure lond
& bryngen aʒen deed leed and heresie and symonye and
goddis curse. and comunly whanne þes heretikis comen bi When they have bought their benefice, they will not do their duty in it.
symonye to gret benefices þei ben not bisi to lerne þe gospel
& teche it cristen men, but ʒeue hem to huntynge and
hawk[y]nge and veyn pleies, and hanten tauernys of wyn and Their dissipated life; hunting, hawking and haunting of taverns and loose society.
ale, aboute strumpetis and grete festes, riche cloþing and
gay squyeris and opere getteris, þat al-most noon schal be
so nyse and worldly proude as þes stynkyng heretikis. and
ʒif ony poore prestis wole come to here chirchis and treuly They call poor priests heretics, for preaching God's law.
dispise synne and frely teche goddis lawe, þe gospel of ihū
crist, and comaundementis of god, þes coueitous symonyentis
welen be þe firste to lette hem wiþ þis grete colour þat suche
prechoris ben heretikis; and þis þei seyn for þei ben ful of
heresie and wolden þat no man spoke aʒenst here cursed lif.
þus þei techen not hem self but ensauple of pride, lecherie
and opere synnes, and letten opere trewe prestis to techen
goddis lawe. and þis is on of þe most vengauce þat god
takiþ on synful men, to suffre suche ypocritis to reule þe
peple & drawe hem to helle bi wiþ-drawynge of goddis word

¹ god X.² omitted X.

and ȝeuyng of opyn¹ ensaumples of synne. for haue þei here myrþe and iolite, nowarde to hem hou faste þe woluyes of helle wirien cristen soulis & beren hem to helle; for þei han maad priuily couenaunt with þe deuyl þat hou many beneficis þat² þei may gete bi lesynges & symonye þe deuyl schal strangle þe soulis at his wille as for hem, so þat þei han here lustis of grete statis and worschipe of þe world and plente of richessis and glotonye and lecherie and meynteneris þerinne. & þis is luciferis pride, stynkyng ypocrisie and anticristis blasphemye, to crie and meyntene þat suche ben able curatis and grete men of holy chirche.

They have made compact with the devil.

Capitulum 9^m.

Also lordis fallen foule in ypocrisie and in defaute of charite, for þei ben redi to holde vp here worldly name, lordschipe and meyntene here courtis wiþ gret cost, sendyng of men boþe of lawe and of armes, & prikyng bi here owen persones for to plede, for to fiȝtte and for to lyue & dye þerfore, and to be vengid on men þat don aȝenst here wille, worschipe, or profit; but for to meyntene goddis lawe and stond for his worschipe, þat þei ben holden to vp peyne of lesyng of here lordischipe & anemtis god, and lesyng of bodi and soule and helle wiþ-uten hende, who is þat lord þat wolde treuli speke, coste, traueile, and suffre mekely dispit, pursuyng and deþ in tyme of nede. þes lordis owen to quake aȝenst domes day and tyme of here deþ, þat more bisili traueilen to meyntenen here litil worldely lordshipe³ and to seke here owen worschipe & drit of þis world þanne þei traueile *to meyntene þe most riȝtful lawe & ordenaunce of ihū crist in his chirche, & to procure, norische & meyntene cristen soulis in good gouernaile and holy lif. certis ȝif þei don þus and coueiten þerbi to be holden goode cristen lordis, here pride, ypocrisie and false coueitise wole bryng hem to euere-lastyng peyne in helle. ¶ Also marchauntis and riche men of þis wikked world fallen in

Lords fall into hypocrisy and want of charity

in going to law and fighting for their private ends,

but will do no such thing for God's sake, to whose defence they are bound by tenure.

*[p. 20 MS.]

Merchants fall into hypocrisy.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³ worschipe X.

moche ypocrisie; for þei traueilen nyȝt & day, bi watir & lond in cold, & in hete, bi false sotiltis and cautelis & grete sweri[n]ges nedles & false, for to gete muche drit or muk of þis world, to gete riche wyues, & purchase londis & rentis, & dewelle in pore mennus dette after þat þei han desceyued hem in byynge of here catel; & ȝit ben so bisi in þouȝt & speche in goyng and rydyng abouten þis muk þat vnneþe may þei onys þenke on god & han mynde of here false robberie þat þei vsen bi false wettes & mesures to amende hem. ȝif alle here businesse & loue goo þus wrongly to þe world & nouȝt or to litel to heuene and heuenely þingis, þei failen foule of holy lif; & ȝit holden hem self holy & coueiten to ben holden holy of oþer men, & ben wode ȝif men speken treuly aȝenst here cursed synnes; but *certes* þis is ypocrisie.

They are so busy in getting muck of this world and rich wives

that they cannot think of God.

False weights and measures.

Capitulum 10^m.

Generaly ypocrisie regneþ among alle statis of cristen men; for whanne men ben cristened þei forsaken þe deuyll, al his pride & al his werkis, þat ben werkis of synne; and ȝit þei turnen to synne as an hound to his spuyng and here-wiþ holden hem goode cristen men. but summe don verrey penaunce for þes synnes, & summe dwelle euere stille þer-inne & rennen to helle, as crist seiþ in þe gospel & in þe bok of iob; & many men don bodily penaunce, as fastynge and goynge barfote, but þei fasten not fro pride ne enuye ne coueitise, but preien for wrongful vengauce of oþere enemyes aȝenst charite, and þis is foule ypocrisie to make men holden hem holy whanne þei stynken bifore god for old endured synne. For god seiþ be ysaye þat a man to turmente his hed and peyne his bodi only is not þat fast þe whiche god chees, ¹but þis is þe fast þat god ches; ¹a man to breke þe bondis of synne & do werkis of mercy to poore men & nedi. ¶ But vpon þe text of þis gospel bi ordre of seynt matheu Ion with þe gildene

Hypocrisy reigns among all Christians since they break their baptismal vows.

Some repent,

some do false penance, but keep their evil will.

Isaiah lviii. 5.

John Chrysostom.

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

mouþ seiþ þat a prest is in dette to teche openly and treuly
 þe treuþe of goddis lawe, and ellis he is traitour to þe treuþe
 of holy writt. ¹ So a lewyd man is boundyn to mayntene
 þe treuþe ¹ of holy writt, and ellis he is *traitour* to god
 & to his lawe and his peple. & here-fore riche men owen
 to drede of treson and traitre aʒenst god & his lawe
 whanne þei meyntene not þe treuþe of þe gospel, but ben
 aboute to stoppe it & techeris *þer-of* bi sotil cautelis & false
 lesynges for fleschli loue or coueitise. for as iudas dide þei
 sillen þe treuþe, and so crist þat is treuþe, *for money or ²
 fleschly loue. And siþ þei sillen treuþe þat is a spiritual
 good for money or worldely þyng ³ þei ben cursed symo-
 nyentis & so heretikis. moche owen þei to quake, siþ crist
 seiþ in þe gospel þat who euere dispisiþ cristis disciplis, in
 þat he dispisiþ crist; and at þe day of dom *þere* schal be
 lesse peyne to sodom & gomor, þat weren distroied for synne,
 þan to þo men þat wolen not resceyue cristis disciplis and
 his gospel, ne lyue after þe techyng of cristis gospel.
 principaly siþ suche men slen crist as moche as in hem is,
 and dryuen þe holy gost out of his temple & þe holy
 trynite; & ʒit þei taken þe office to meyntene goddis lawe
 and techeris *þer-of*, & vpon þis *seruyces* þei han þes heiʒe
 statis & lordischipis. but *certis* it is foul ypocrisie þus
 to suffre synne regne, siþ lordis and men of grete statis,
 as maires, ben so muche biholden to destroie it, & mowne
 welle don it in dede, & to lette trewe *prechoris* of þe
 gospel, & meyntene *prechours* of lesyngis, fablis & cronyclys
 for monye & worldely frendschipe.

Duty of laymen
to maintain the
truth of holy
writ.

*[p. 21 MS.]

But lords and
mayors uphold
preachers of lies
and chronicles.

Capitulum 11.⁴

Hypocrisy of
Pharisees the
worst.

But ʒit ypocrisie of phariseis is most cursed & perilous of
 alle *opere*; for whanne þei han disceyued cristendom þis
 hundrid ʒeer & more bi ypocrisie & false *prechyng*e of fablis
 & errouris & heresies, magnifyenge synful *mennus* ordenaunce

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

² of X.

³ omitted X.

⁴ This is headed Chap. XII. in X. In AA Chap. IX. and X. are run together, and this is marked Chap. X.

abouen goddis lawe & ordenaunce, & drawen pore mennus almes & liflode to proude beggeris to make grete wast houses, and desceyue men bi fals assoilyng, bi fals¹ pardon, bi veyne preiers & synguler or specyal, & letteris of fraternite, puttynge open beggyng & clamours on ihū crist, þanne þei crien fast þat poore prestis treuli & frely prechyng þe gospel as crist biddiþ, techyng men to do verray penaunce for here synnes & not trusten ouermuche to false pardon & cursed preieris of ypocritis, & to do here almes to pore feble men crokid & blynde, as crist seiþ him self; þat þei ben cause of alle þe² perturbacion of þe rewme; but þei lyen falsly & openly to eche trewe man. for siþ synne is cause of perturbacion, & þes prestis vpon here kunnyng þat god ȝeueþ hem of holy writt & þer-wiþ bisien hem nyȝt & day to distroye synne, þei ben aboute to make pees betwixe god & man. & þei þat meyntenen synne bi false confessionys & veyn special preieris & pardons ben most cause of discencion & werris. but here þei suen þe fadir of lesyngis þat stired þe heiȝe prestis & pharisees in cristis tyme to pute on hym & his disciplis þat þei disturbeden þe lond of iude & wolden distroie it, for crist and his disciplis reproueden þe coueitise, ypocrisie & falsenesse of þe heiȝe prestis & false pharisees. so þe deuyl steriþ now false newe pharisees of synguler religion wiþ-oute cristis ordynaunce, þat ben more sotil in malice & lesyngis and ypocrisie þan³ þe firste, to stoppe pore prestis fro prechyng of *þe gospel & reprouyng of synne, for bi þis offis of crist don treuly here synnes of lesyngis and ypocrisie schulde be knowen and distroied and goddis lawe knowen and kept and synne chasid out of lond. but false ypocritis stryuen aȝenst þis profet of cristen men, & clepen techyng of þe gospel & goddis hestis newe techyng, & techyng of verrey penaunce doynge & of riȝtful ȝeuyng & of almes and open prechyng aȝenst synne errour aȝenst charite. God kepe cristen men fro ypocrisie & false lesyngis of pharisees and here meynteneris. Amen.

They accuse poor priests of disturbing the realm,

who would make peace between God and man.

The High Priests and Pharisees did so with Christ.

Now the devil stirs up these hypocrites to stop poor priests from preaching, lest their lies and hypocrisy should be known.

*[p. 22 MS.]

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³ þat X.

II.

HOW MEN OUGHT TO OBEY PRELATES.

I do not think this tract is by Wyclif. Its tone is not that of a man who has known the Court and been engaged in political affairs, but rather of some poor clergyman, who felt the burdens laid upon him by the bad government of the Church, and spoke from the bitterness of his personal experience. The extravagant expression, 'two or three thousand miles' (p. 30), points in the same direction. On the other hand, the text, 1 Cor. v. 5, is used here in the same way as in Prelates, No. IV. in this volume, and the warning against misusing the freedom given by God (p. 32) recalls a fine passage in the tract on Feigned Contemplative Life (No. X.).

Copied from the Corpus MS. X, and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Prelates charge poor priests and those who believe with them that they disobey their superiors, that they make light of excommunication, and break the law. They are willing to obey as far as they may in accordance with God's commandments. But there is a hardship in men being summoned to distant places for no good purpose. It hinders men from doing the duties which God commands. Wickedness of prelates—their simony and other sins. If prelates will do their duty, poor priests will obey them.
- II. As to excommunication, poor priests say that they will not incur God's curse for anything in heaven or earth, but they would rather be wrongfully cursed by man than break God's law. Excommunication often inflicted from spite. Curates ought not to execute letters of excommunication which they know to be ill-grounded.
- III. As to law, true men will obey man's law so far as it agrees with God's. Laws are often made only to support the pride and pomp of prelates, and are an undue burden.

Hou men owen obesche to prelatis drede curs &
kepe lawe.

Capitulum primum.

Prelatis sclaunderen pore prestis & opere cristen men þat þei wolen not obesche to here souereynes, ne dreden curs, ne drede ne kepe þe lawe, but dispise alle þing þat is aʒenst here likynge. And herfore þei ben werse þan iewis or paynymes, and alle lordis & prelates & myʒti men schulden distroie hem, for ellis þei wolen distroie holy chirche & make eche man to lyue as hym likiþ; and no þing may more distroie cristendom.

Prelates slander poor priests, charging them with disobedience to the law,

¶ But here poore prestis & trewe men mekely wolen and wilfully obesche to god & holy chirche, & to eche man in erþe in as myche as he techiþ treuly goddis comaundementis & profitable treuþe for here soulis, and no more owiþ ony man to obeche to crist god & man, ne to ony apostle. and ʒif ony worldly prelat axe more obedience he his anticrist & luciferis maister, for ihū crist is god of riʒtwisnesse & treuþe & of pees & charite, and may not do aʒenst riʒtwisnesse ne treuþe ne helpe of mennus soulis ne charite, siþ he may not lye ne denye him self. hou þanne schulde or myʒtte ony synful prelat charge men and constreyne to do aʒenst ryʒtwisnesse & helpe of soulis and¹ good conscience; for crist seiþ in þe gospel of seynt ion þat þe sone may not do but þat þing he haþ seyn his fadir don; & þerfore crist comaundid to alle men þat þei schulde not bileue to him but ʒif he dide þe werkis of þe fadir of heuene. where cristen men schullen be constreyned be anticristis clerkis to don after here comaundement whanne þei don not werkis of god but werkis of þe fend? & þus crist spekiþ to þe iewis & axeþ hem whi þei bileuen not to hym ʒif he seiþe trewþe; as who seiþ, ʒif he seide nouʒt² treuþe þei schulde nouʒt²

but poor priests are willing to obey as far as God's commandments allow.

John v. 19.

John x. 37.

John viii. [46].

¹ in X.

² omitted X.

John xviii. [23].
*[p. 23 MS.]

Prelates want
their subjects to
come to any dis-
tant corner of the
diocese.

With their wealth
and horses, they
should go after
their subjects.

bileue to hym. and þer-for crist seiþ to þe iewis who of
þou schal repreue me of synne, & he wold þat eche man
hadde do so ȝif he myȝtt treuly. þerfore in tyme of his passion
crist seide to þe bischopis seruaunt whanne he smote him
in þe face: *ȝif I haue spoken euyl, bere þou witnesse of
euyl. & siþ prelatiſ ben vikeris of crist, þei owen to suen
to hym in þis obedience & axe no more of ony man. ¶ But
here is þe sore in þis obedience; prelatiſ axen þat prestis
& oþere sugetis schulden come for here souereyns whider
euere hem likid, at þe ferþeste place of here diecise, þouȝ
prelatiſ kunnyn not holy writt ne kepen it, but don opynly
þer aȝenst many weies; & þis is wrong for many skillis.
first, siþ crist god & man souȝte mannus soule lost þoruȝ
synne bi ȝritti ȝeer and more wiþ grete traieuele, werynesse
& many peynes, bi many þousand myles vpon his feet, in gret
cold and stormes & tempestis, prelatiſ schulden not couche
in castellis & suffre þe fende to deuoure cristene soulis, &
þanne make a pore man to renne two or þre þousand myles
& ȝeue hem þere ensauple of pride & oþere synnes. siþ
þei han so myche tresour & grete hors, & ben heiȝe vikeris
of crist to seue his lif in mekenesse and pouerte and harde
traueile to saue mennes soulis, and siþ þei ben holden to spende
here catel and lese here bodily lif for sauynge of cristen soulis
as did crist & his apostelis; myche more owe þei to spende
a litil traueile and money to seke & visyte synful men &
esen hem¹ in body & soule. And not maken hem nedlis
to spende here litel catel and be inpacient & grucchyng
aȝenst god & man & out of charite. for we reden not in
al þe lawe of grace þat crist or ony of his disciplis vsede
þis symonyng or axid þis obedience of ony synful man riche
or pore. lord whi schulde a synful ydiot axe more obedience
þan² diden crist & his apostelis? & we rede not in þe lawe
of grace þat crist apperid comunly bifore þe heiȝe prestis
and pharisees fore here symonyng ne his apostelis after
sendynge of þe holy goste, But ȝif þei weren constreyned

¹ omitted X.

² þat X.

bi violence or ellis ȝif þei weren in place where criste tauȝte in þe temple. ¶ Also crist techiþ in the gospel þat a man owiþ to leue þe lasse good & do þe more; siþ he comaundid a man to leue þe beriyng of his fadir and go preche þe Matthew viii. 21. gospel. þanne a prest schulde not leue prechyng of the Priests should not go away from their preaching for any such bidding. gospel & renne to vncerteyn placis for biddynge of worldly prelatis, enemyes to god & his *seruauntis*, siþ prechyng of þe gospel is betere þan bodely rennyng so to ferre placis, for peril of enemyes, for wastynge of pore mennus goodis, and for drede of rebelte aȝenst god. for seynt ierom seiþ in þe popis lawe þat he þat leueþ þe more good or putteþ it behynde þe lesse good synneþ not menely but greuously. siþ siche *somyng of prelatis is not groundid in cristis lif *[p. 24 MS.] ne his apostelis ne reson, but in *anticristis* power bi dowynge of clerkis wiþ secular lordschipe aȝenst holy writt. and þus instede of cristis mekenesse & pouert and charite and trewe techynge of þe gospel is brouȝt in worldly pride of prestis and coueitise & enuye and discencion in cristis peple, & bodily turmentynge bi prestis, as þouȝ þei weren worldly lordis of þe kyngis lege men boþe of bodi & of catel, & chargynge of soulis with grete chargis aȝenst þe fredom of goddis lawe and the helpe of soulis her-bi brouȝt in; for þes worldly prelatis chargen men to speke not aȝenst here pride and coueitise ne brynge hem to þe ordynaunce of crist, but raþer to lyue hem self in pride and falsnesse of þis world þan to turne to þe mekenesse and trewe lif and to þenke on here deþ day, for bi þis goode lif of secularis þe lif of worldly prelatis schulde be knowen for ypocrisie and cursednesse. and þus bi þis feyned power of somonyng and cursynge worldly prelatis ben maad cruel turmentours of cristis *seruauntis*, and schewen hem self & make, but Prelates do not wish laymen to lead a good life, lest their own should be seen in its true light. falsly, lordis of mennus bodies & catel & soulis also, to stoppe & lette good lif of cristene men, þat þe holy trynyte may not do for his riȝtwisnesse & charite; but where ben falsere *anticristis*, *perilousere* heretikis, & cursedher blasphemeres. ¶ Also no man owiþ to putte by-hynde goddis

Prelates persecute Christ's servants.

Prelates make
men leave their
wives and
families,

and make curates
leave their flocks
unkept among
the wolves of
hell.

Luke vi. 39.

Worldly prelates
are blind guides,
who lead them-
selves and others
to hell.

*[p. 25 MS.]

A summons to a
higher judge ex-
cuses from at-
tendance on a
lower.

biddynge and þe byddynge of a synful man bifore; & god
biddiþ eche man vp peyne of dampnacion þat haþ wif &
children & meyne to gouerne hem wel in goddis lawe.
þanne no weddid man owiþ to leue his wife & children &
meyne vngouerned, & goo many hundred myles in drede
of þeues & enemyes, & wast his goodis & suffre his folk
to perische in soule or in body. and myche more no curat
owiþ to leue his schepe vnkept among þe wolues of helle,
& ride with grete coost to ferre placis for pride, enuye or
coueitise of worldly clerkis. & þis reson makith sikernesse
for prestis to dewelle with goddis þeple & profite to hem,
& for children to take cure of here heldris, & not ride ne
renne aboute & leue þis heste of god vndon for somonyng
of worldly prelatis. Also crist seiþ in þe gospel þat ȝif
þe blynde lede þe blynde þei fallen boþe into þe lake. þanne
siþ worldly prelatis ben blynde in goddis lawe, boþe in
kunynge þer-of & lif þer-after, no man schulde be led
bi hem in kepyng of his soule, for drede lest þei falle boþ
in-to ¹helle. For siþþe þei ledyn hemself to ¹ helle-ward for
ignoraunce of holy writt or coueitise of worldeli worschipe,
heiþe states & worldly muk, þei wolen lede oþere men þe
same weie. & þus þei ben cursed of god, for þat þat is good
& goddis lawe þei dampnen for euyl & erroure, * & ² þat þat is
errour & ² euyl aȝenst goddis lawe þei chesen & techen for
good and profytable; & þus þei dampnen hemself & alle
þat ben led bi hem. Also bi reson & mannus lawe ȝif
a man be somonyd to-gidre to þe heiþere iuge & a lasse
he schal be excused fro þe lasse bi þe vertue of þe heiþere
iuge; but eche man is somoned first of god to worschipe
hym in ³ alle his witt & alle his myȝt, bifor þat a worldly
prelat somone hym to renne aboute, in whiche rennyng
his witt & his myȝt schullen be perid; þanne bi vertue of
þis cheef domesman he owiþ to be excused fro þis somonyng
of worldly prelat. but be ⁴ þe suget ware of feynynge here,
þat he waste not ne mysusse þe ȝiftis of god vnder colour

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

²⁻² omitted X.

³ & X.

⁴ omitted X.

of þis fredom; for god wole haue rekennynge of eche dede, of eche word, & of eche þouȝt, & of eche ȝifte, & eche tyme, & moment. And be þe worldly prelat ward of blasphemye here, þat he compelle not for his pride þis suget to putte bihynde þe betre worschipynge of god and vnder colour of obedience make hym to myspende þe tyme & goddis ȝiftis. ¶ Also men of lawe & resoun seyn it is worst of alle to take¹ dom vnder a suspect domesman; but þes worldly prelatis ben suspect domesmen anemtis goddis seruauntis, for þei been enemys to þe persone of cristis seruauntis & also to þe cause of god. for comunly þei comen to here statis bi symonye & so ben heretikis, as þe popis lawe seiþ, & contynen² in pride, coueitise, extorciouns,³ & meyntenynge of here synne & oþere mennys for annuel rente, & haten & pursuen boþe cristis lawe & his seruauntis þat speken aȝenst here synne, to amende hem þer-of & alle þat ben vnkunynge in goddis lawe; how schulde a treue man be demyd bi suspect iuges. & siche vnkunynge & euyl leuyng prelati ben most hardy to dampne trewe⁴ treuthis of holi writ & pursue trewe⁴ men to prison & deþ þat meyntenen holy writt & trewþe aȝenst here coueitise, pride, symonye & lustis. ¶ And newe religious assessours of þes vnkunynge worldely prelatis ben more suspect þan ony oþer; for þei grounden hem in þis, þat holy writt is fals but here owen doctours and gloses ben trewe. And so þei putten falsnesse & defaute of witt in god, & seyn þat a synful ydiot & in caas a deuyl of helle is trewere, wittiere & more ful of charite & myȝt to teche men trewþe þanne is þe trinyte & ihū crist god & man. & þei haten more cristis seruauntis þat stonden for þe trewþe of holy writt & ihū cristis leuyng & reprouen here ypocrisie & schewen here falsnesse to þe peple; and þey⁵ ben more sotil in malice, & dysceyuen more lordis & ladies & þe comunes in feiþ & charite, & maken hem to triste þat it⁶ is almes

These prelates
are suspected
judges.

Prelates mostly
come to their
position by
simony.

The assessors
whom the pre-
lates take from
religious orders
are unfit to judge.

¹ make AA.

² conteynen X.

³ omitted X.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

⁵ omitted X.

⁶ omitted X.

*[p. 26 MS.]

2 John, 10.

Let prelates do
their duty, and
poor priests will
obey them truly.

to distroye trewe men þat stonden *for goddis lawe & trewe lyuyng. & þus þe dampnable ignoraunce of goddis lawe & cursed lif of þes worldly prelatis & stronge meyntenynge of here owen synne & opere mennus ben cause whi pore prestis & cristen men han hem suspect of heresie & enemyte boþe of goddis cause & his seruauantis; & þer-fore þe fleen fro hem as anticrist and heretykes, as ioon þe euaungelist techiþ in his epistilis. ¶ But lete prelatis studie bisili & treuly holy¹ writt & lyuen opyn wel þer-aftir, and distroie opyn synne of opere men be here witt and myȝt, & pore prestis & cristene men wiþ-uten ony somonyng wolen wiþ gret traueile and cost and wille, ȝee bi londe & bi water, mekely come to hem & don hem obedience & reuerence, as þei wolden to petir & poul & cristis apostlis. deme þe world wheþer þis dyuysion belong on worldely prelatis vnkunynge and cursed of lif, or on pore prestis and trewe men þat fayn desiren nyȝt & day to knowe goddis wille & worschipe & do it bifore alle opere þingis.

Capitulum 2^m.

Christian men
will not deserve
God's curse
for any worldly
good,

but they will
gladly suffer
man's curse
rather than
break God's law.

Antichrist's
clerks magnify
man's curse.

As to cursynge, cristen men seyn trewely þat þei dreden it so moche þat þei wollen not wilfully & wityngly disserue goddis curse, neiþer for good in erþe ne in heuene; ne mannus curse in as myche as it acordiþ wiþ þe riȝtful curs of god; but þei wolle wiþ grete ioie of soule raþere suffre mannus wrongful curs þan wityngly & wilfully breke ony comaundement of god for to wynne þer-bi alle worschipsis of þis world, and to kepe here body in alle likyngis neuere so longe; & raþere to suffre sclaundryng & bachityng and prisonyng and exilid, hangyng, drawyng, quarteryng and brennyng wiþ helpe and grace of god þan to forsake þe treuþe of holy writt & lif of crist, for ellis þei weren not in charite ne in weie of saluacion. but anticristis clerkis magnyflen so myche mannus curs þat þei taken noon hede to þe dredeful curs of god; as ȝif

¹ omitted X.

men were more myȝtti & riȝtful þan is almyȝtti god in trynȝte. for þouȝ men breken opynly alle þe comaundementis of god & lyuen in pride, coueityse, enuye, glotonye and oþer synnes, but ȝif it be lecherie, þere renneþ no mannus curs; ne for lecherie ȝif men wolen paie rente bi ȝeere & dwelle stil þer-inne als longe as hym liste; so al þe drede is turned to mannus curs and no þing to goddis curs.

They curse for no sin but lechery, and for that they will take a rent.

¶ But ȝif a man trespas litel or nouȝt aȝenst a prelat or aȝenst þe wynnyng of clerkis, he schal be cursed & pursued þat al þe ende of his kyn may haue sorowe þerfore; ȝee, þouȝ a treuþe of holy writt & reson be seid *bi charite aȝenst þe pride, coueitise & open wrong þat prelatis don to here neiȝboris, boþe in here gostly offis & also worldly wrongis; and here-bi þei ponyschen more for here owen dispit or wrong þan for dispit of god almyȝtty. ¶ But here men musen¹ whi prelatis ben so redy to curse in here owne cause, siþ petir techiþ cristen men to blisse & not no werie ne curse; & god biddiþ vs loue oure enemyes & don good to hem þat haten vs, and to preie for men þat falsly pursuen vs. siþ he þat cu[r]seþ anoþer man for his owne vengauce or worldly catel more þanne for to venge synne don aȝenst god & for þe helþe of þe cursed mannus soule cursiþ him-self, for he doiþ aȝenst charite, as gregori techiþ in þe popis lawe. certes men dreden þat þes prelatis ben ful of goddis curse for here symonye in² here entre, & sillyng of sacramentis & gostly officis, as ordres ȝeuyng for money, & halwyng of chirchis & auteris, & for extorcions of pore men, & meyntenynge of synful men in here synne for money, þat þei han no part of goddis blissyng and þerfore cursed fruyt spryngiþ out of a cursed tree.

Men cursed for personal offences,

*[p. 27 MS.]

even for rebukes given in charity.

1 Peter ii. [23.]

Matt. v. [44.]

23qu. 4c^o. inter querelas.

These prelates are cursed by God for their simony.

¶ Lord, whi schulde curatis pronounsens here breþeren a cursed for nakid lettris of syche coueitous prelatis, enemyes of crist & his seruauntis, when þei knowe no cause bi-for god where-for þei be cursed of hym but han euydence bi spekyng & open lif of here neieȝboris þat þei ben in good

Curates should refuse to execute these letters of excommunication if they know them to be unjust.

¹ mowe sen X.

² & X.

lif & in charite. Siþ crist seiþ in þe gospel þat he þat seiþ to his broþer: þou fool! wiþ-out sufficiente cause, & he þat seiþ to his broþer þat haþ þe holi gost wiþ good lif & charite þat he is voide & wiþ-oute kunnyng, schal be gilty of helle, wheþer þis be charite to curse a man for

Matt. v. 22.

Poor men cursed for sixpence.

sexen pans whan he may vnneþis lyue be al his traueile, & for he traueliþ not at here som[on]yng an hundrid myle or moo or lesse & leueþ not his wif & children vngouerned. for ȝif a preste pronounse sicke a man a cursed þat is blissed of god he liȝeþ vpon his broþer & beriþ fals witenesse aȝenst goddis dom. for þouȝ he apere not at here somonyng to ȝeuen hem mony at here wille, he may ben excused aȝenst god & man for many skillis. þerfor þis nakid lettre of coueitouse prelatis is no sykirnesse anemtis god to pronounse a cristen man for cursed, & noon obedience schulde constreyne a prest to wittenesse a falshede aȝenst his broþer and aȝenst his conscience but ȝif it be anticristis obedience, for certis god wole not constreyne a man to þis false obedyence. Lord, where anticrist & his clerkis schullen.

Prelates might curse a man whom they knew to have broken God's commandments.

ȝif prelatis knowen þat þis man were cursed of god for brekyng of his hestis þei myȝten pronounse þis to þe peple to make opere men to flee his companye as an heþene mannys. But comunly þei knowe not þis so wel as opere

*[p. 28 MS.]

1 Cor. v. 5.

pore men, *for þei taken no reward to þe hestis of god, but al to here owen lawes & customes. þe apostelis hadden þis power when a synful man was rebel aȝenst goddis lawe to ȝeue þe fend power of his body to traueilen it, so þat þe soule were saaf. But owre prelatis han not þis power, þerfore þei feynen þat þei sleen þe soule bi þer cursyng wanne þe bodi is neuere þe werse, & þanne þei techen lordis to enprisone þe bodi aftir fourti daies a cursyng, þouȝ þe man be cursed¹ for holdyng goddis hestis; & maken lordis to ben turmentouris of cristene men, whanne þe fendis doren not touche hem for drede of god. þis cursyng schulde be suspendid for peril on alle sidis, and trewe techyng of

Prelates pretend to slay the soul.

and teach lords to imprison the body after forty days' curse.

¹ blessed AA.

cristis gospel & holy ensaumplis of prelatiſ lif & manasyng
of purgatorie & helle and confortyng of þe blisse of heuene
schulde be schewed & regne among cristene peple; and þes
foure schulden maken men to flee synne & lyue wel & ende
in perfit charite, & þis were best for alle parties.

Capitulum 3^m.

As to lawe, trewe men seyn þat þei willen mekely & wilfully drede & kepe goddis lawe vp here kunnyng & myȝt, & eche lawe of mannes makynge in as myche as þei witen þat it acordiþ wiþ goddis lawe & reson & good conscience & to þe riȝtful execucion þer-of; & god him self may bynde man no more to his owen lawe for his endeles riȝtwisnesse & charite þat he haþ to mannes soule. lord, where synful men þat ben anticristis, & in caas deuelis in flesch & blood, may bynde men more to here wickid lawis & wrong execucions of hem þanne god wille bynde hem to his most riȝtful lawe & profitable. cristen men knowen wel of feiþ þat neiþer petir ne poul ne ony creature may do ouȝt lawefully aȝenst þe trewþe of holi writt ne aȝenst þe edificacion of holy chirche, þat is good techynge & gouernynge & amendynge of cristene soulis. what power han þan worldly prelatiſ to make so many wickid lawes? siþ god curseþ hem þat maken wickid lawes, & comaundiþ þat no man schal adde to his wordis ne drawe fro hem vp peyne of grete cursynge of god & dampnyng in helle. þat is to seie þat no man adde false sentence ne false glose to holy writt, for þan, as ierom seiþ, he is an heretik; and þat no man drawe ony treuþe fro goddis wordis, for þei enclosen alle nedeful treuþe & profitable for mannys soule. & to þis entente siþ poul in his pistel þat ȝif ony man, ȝee apostil or angel of heuene, preche oþer þing þan is tauȝte of crist & his apostelis¹ he is cursid. And Seint Jon seiþ,¹ in þe ende of þe apocalips, þat ȝif ony man adde þus to goddis wordis, god schal brynge vpon hym alle þe vengauces wryten in þe

True men will keep law as far as it agrees with God's law and conscience.

God bids that no man add to his words.

Gal. i. 8.

Rev. xxii. 18.

¹ omitted X.

apocalips, & ȝif ony man wiȝdrawe þus fro goddis wordis,
 *god schal don hym out of þe bok of lif. ¶ Lord, siȝ goddis
 lawe is so myche & so hard to vndirstonde, as austyn &
 oþere seyntis techen, þat þouȝ eche man hadde neuere so gret
 witt & myȝtte lyue hool & sond in bodi & wittis til þe day
 of dome, he schulde euere haue ynowȝ to lerne and ocupie
 him þerine at þe fulle, whi schulle wordly curatis &
 prelatis¹ make so many bokis of here newe lawis for to
 meyntene here pride & coueitise & worldly array? siȝ men
 be nowe of lesse wittis & schortere tyme & feblere of com-
 plexion. certis þe chargen men ouer myȝt & maken hem
 bysy to kunne wrongful tradiciouns of synful folis makynge
 & to leue holy writt vnstudied, vnknoud & vnkept; & þis is
 a sotil cautel of þe fend to for-do goddis lawe & knowynge
 & loue of oure goode god. And þerfore crist pleyneþ of þis
 peple, bi þe prophete ysaie, & in þe gospel also, þat is peple
 worschipiȝ him in lippis but here herte is fer fro god, & þei
 worschipe hym wiȝ-oute cause, for þei techen þe loris of
 men & here maundementis. & ȝit seyntis in þe popis lawe
 reprocen euyle lawis vngroundid in holy writt & reson, & hem
 þat maken hem also, & seyn þat we owen to take hede what
 crist seiȝ, & to no man ellis but in also myche as he acordiȝ
 wiȝ crist, & he his false þat seiȝ or techen ony þing þat is
 not euydently groundid in goddis lawe. & þerfore seynt
 petyr comaundiȝ ȝif ony speke, loke he speke as goddis wordis.
 þus þes worldly prelatis drawen cristen men fro holy writt
 þat is þe beste lawe & constreyne men to here owne lawis ful
 of errour, maad to coloure here cursed pride & coueitise; for
 þei ponysche men sorere for breken of here owen lawis þan
 for brekyng of goddis lawe, & louen & chirischen men of
 here lawe and dispisen & putten abac men of goddis lawe.
 Late wordly prelatis ceesse to schlaundre pore men, seyng
 þat þei wolen not obesche to here souereyns & dreden not
 curs but dispise lawe. for in alle þes þre þei ben clere bifore
 god & man ȝif riȝt & reson & charite be wel souȝt.

*[p. 29 MS.]

God's law enough
to study.Isaiah xxix. 13.
Matt. xv. 8, 9.Saints in the
pope's law bid us
obey only Christ.

1 Peter iv. 11.

¹ X. inserts and.

III.

THE RULE AND TESTAMENT OF ST. FRANCIS.

THIS tract is distinguished among the many directed against the friars by its method of attack. The first and longer part consists merely in a translation of the rule by which the Franciscans admitted themselves bound, and the comment confines itself to pointing out how completely that rule was disregarded or evaded. The peculiar interest of the tract lies in its bringing before us how nearly in its idea the Franciscan order approached the body of poor priests, whom Wyclif sent out to preach. When the writer complains that at Rome "false menours" persecute those who would keep Francis' rule to the letter, we have an expression of the sympathy which we might have divined between the Lollards and the Spiritual Franciscans. (Cf. the Tract on the Leaven of Pharisees.) But before we have read to the end we find the author true to the "freedom of the gospel," which Wyclif consistently preached, declaring that no other order than Christ's is needed, since those who can carry out the highest and best life have that duty laid upon them by Christ's order to serve God with all their heart and all their strength. We may compare with this the saying (S. E. W. III. 452), "Every conseil of Crist is to sum man and sum tyme a precept."

I think that the author is Wyclif. The tract, *Fifty Heresies of Friars*, printed by Mr. Arnold (No. 24), seems like an amplification of this; and it is probably of later date, as the doctrine of transubstantiation is attacked there, but not mentioned here.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X, and collated with the Dublin MS. AA, and with the Oxford MS. W. All through W. has þo for þe; hor for her; hom for hem; and haȝ the third person singular in s.

SUMMARY.

The greater part of this tract is simply a translation from the Latin of the law laid down for the Franciscans by their founder. To this is added a short comment, pointing out—

- 1st. That the testament is binding upon Franciscans;
- 2nd. That the Franciscans keep neither rule nor testament, failing in obedience, in poverty, and in charity.

After this general statement of their faults comes an account of various ways in which they evade the letter of the rule. The tract ends with a declaration that no rule is of use except so far as it agrees with that laid down by Christ.

þis his þe reule of seynt fraunseis.

Capitulum primum.

The rule is to keep the gospel in obedience, poverty, and chastity.

þe reule and þe lyuyng of frere menours is þis: to kepe þe holy gospel of oure lord ihū crist, lyuyng in obedience, wiþ-uten propre, & in chastitie. Frere fraunseis bihetiþ¹ obedience and reuerence to þe lord þe pope honorie, & to his successouris, þe whiche entren bi general & holy eleccion, & to þe chirche of rome, & be opere freris holden to obesche² to frere fraunseis & to his successouris.

Of hem þat wolen take þis lif, hou þei schullen be resceyued.

Capitulum 2^{m.3}

Any one desiring to enter the Order is to be examined by the provincial minister.

*[p. 30 MS.]

He must have no wife or must dispose of her properly.

Must give away all his possessions.

Is to have a year of probation.

ʒif ony wille take þis lif, & comen to oure breþeren, sende hem to þe mynystris prouyncials, to whom only, & not to opere, be grauntid *leue to resceyue freris. þerfore late þe mynystris diligently examyne hem of⁴ þe comun feiþ and þe sacramentis of holy chirche, þat ʒif þei beleuen alle þes þingis, and wilen feþfully knowleche hem, & stedefastly kepe hem to þe ende of þe world, & ʒif þei han noon wyues, or ʒif þei han wyues & here wyues ben entrid in-to religion, or ellis þat here wyues han ʒouen here housbondis lyue⁵ bi auctorite of þe bischop of þe diocise & now maad a vow of chastite or contynce, and here wyues ben of sich age þat noon euyl suspecion may be reysed of hem, late þe prouyncials seie to hem wordes of þe holi gospel þat þei goo & sille alle here goodis & ʒeue hem to pore men, & ʒif þei may not do þis here goode wille is ynow to hem; & be þe freris & here mynystris war þat þei be not bisi of here temporal goodis, þat þei don freli of here þingis what euere þe lord inspiriþ⁶ to hem. ¶ Neþeles ʒif conseil be nedful her-to, haue þe mynystris leue to sende hem to summe men þat dreden god, bi whos conseil here goodis schullen be ʒouen to pore men. aftirward graunte þe mynystris to hem cloþis of probacion, þat is to⁷ seie tweie⁸ cotis or kirtlis wiþ-uten hood and a girdil & a brech & a chaperon to þe girdel, but ʒif opere þing after god be seyn to ye mynystris. ¶ But whanne þe ʒeer of probacion is endid be þei resceyued to obedience, bihetyng to kepe þis lif & reule; & in no manere schal it

¹ behetis W.

² obesþe X.

³ In W. this is reckoned as part of Chapter I.

⁴ for X.

⁵ leeve W.

⁶ enpropriþ X.; inspiraverit Lat.

⁷ omitted X.

⁸ two W.

be leffel to hem to goo out of þis ordre vp¹ þe comaundement of þe lord þe pope, for aftir þe holy gospel no man sendynge his hond to þe plow; and lokenge a-zen is able to þe kyngdom of god. & haue þei þat han bihiȝt obedience cotis or kirtlis² wiþ an hood and an oþer wiþouten³ hood; þei þat wilen haue schon & be nedid þer-to may bere hem. ¶ And be alle freris cloþid wiþ foule cloþis, & þei may pese hem azen or cloute hem of sacchis & oþere pecis wiþ þe blissynge of god. And I moneste & stire þes freris þat þei dispise not and deme not þo men whom þei seen cloþid wiþ softe cloþis & colourid, & vse delicat metis & drynkis, but more eche of hem deme & dispise him self.

Once fully admitted no one may leave the Order.

All friars to wear foul clothes and mend them with sacks.

Of goddis seruyce & fastyngys, & hou freris schullen go bi þe world.

⁴Capitulum 3^{m. 4}

Do clerkis deuyne officis⁵ after þe ordre of þo⁶ holy chirche of rome, out taken þe sautir, of wheche þei may haue breuyaries, þat is smale sauteris or abreggid; but late lewid freris seie four & twenti pater nostris for matynes, for laudis fyue, for prime, tierce, vndren & noon, for eche of hem seuene pater nostris, & for euensong twelue, & for compleyn seuene. ¶ And preie þei for dede men. and faste þei *fro þe feste of alle hawen⁷ til þe natyuyte of crist, & þo⁸ holy lenten þat bygynneþ fro þe twelþe day of cristemasse to þe fulle fourti daies, þe whiche lenten oure lord halwid wiþ þis holy fast, be þei blissed of þe lord þat⁹ fasten wilfully þis lenten; & be þei not constreyned þat wilen not, but faste þei anoþer lenten til þe resurreccioun of þe lord. but in oþere tymes ben þei not holden to faste but on þe friday; but in tyme of opyn nede ben þe freris not bounden to bodily fast. but I conseile, amoneste, and stire my freris in oure lord ihū crist þat¹⁰ whanne þei gon bi þe world þat þei chide not and stryue not bi wordis, & þat þei iuge not oþere men, but þat þei ben mylde, peisble and manerly, homly & meke, spekyng of al þingis as it is semely. & þat þei schullen not ride but ȝif þei ben nedid for opyn nede or siknesse. ¶ Into what euere hous þei schullen entre seie þei first, pees be to þis hous, & aftir þe holy gospel be it leffel to hem to ete of alle metis þat ben sett to hem, as I haue seid.

Clerks to say their offices except that they may use abridged psalters.

Laymen to say 76 paternosters daily.

Rules as to fasting.

*[p. 31 MS.]

Friars to behave peaceably when abroad.

¹ upon W.

² coote or kirtel W.

³ wiþ an out X. and AA.

⁴⁻⁴ cap^m. ij^m. W.; omitted X.

⁵ office W.

⁶ omitted X. and AA.

⁷ halowe W.

⁸ omitted X. and AA.

⁹ & X.

¹⁰ þan X.

þat Freris resceyuen no money.

Capitulum 4^{m.1}

Nofriar to receive money or pence directly or indirectly.

I comaunde stedefastly to alle freris þat in no manere þei resceyue no money or pens; neiþer bi hem self ne mene² persone putt bitwixe. neþeles for þe nede of sike men & to cloþe oþere freris bi gostly frendis only, þe mynystrys & custodis schullen bere bisy cure, vpe placis & tymes & colde regiouns or contres; as þei schulle see þat it is spedý to here nedy. þat þis þing be euermore saaf, þat as it is seid þei resceyue no pens ne money.

Of þe manere of trauayle of freris.

Capitulum 5^{m.3}

Friars to avoid idleness.

Oure freris to whom god haþ ȝouen grace to traueile, labore þei treuly & deuoutly so þat ydelnesse enemy of soule be excludid or putt away. And þei quenche not þe spirit of holy deuocion and preire to whiche oþer spiritual⁴ þingis schullen serue. But of þe hire of labour receyue þei necessities for hem self & here breþeren wiþ-uten pens or mony, and þat mekely, as it is semyng to seruauentis of god foloweris of þe moste holy pouert.

þat freris apropren no þing to hem self, & hou þei schullen axe almes, & of sike freris.

Capitulum 6^{m.5}

Friars may own nothing.

Freris schulle no þing apropre to hem self neiþer hous ne place ne ony oþer þing, but as pilgrimes & gestis or comelyngyns in þis world, in pouert & mekenesse seruyng to þe lord, goo þei tristiliche for almes, and hem nedip not to be a-schamyd, for oure⁶ lord made hymself pore in þis world⁶ for vs. þis is þe heynesse of þe moste heyȝ pouert, þat makiþ ȝou my breþeren heiris & kyngis of þe kyngdom of heuenys; þis haþ maad ȝou *pore in þingis & enhaunsed ȝou in vertues. be þis ȝoure porcion, or deel, þat bryngiþ perfitely to þe lond of lyuyng men. to þe whiche pouert þe most loued breþeren, hooliche cleuyng for þe reuerence of oure lord ihū crist, wile ȝe nooþing haue lastinge þe world vnder heuene. And where euere freris ben & fynden hem to-gidre schewe þei hem homly bitwixe hem self, & sikyrly schewe eche to oþer his nede. for ȝif a modir norscheþ & loueþ here fleschly child, wiþ hou mychel more diligence schal on loue

*[p. 32 MS.]

All friars to be friendly together.

¹ cap^m. iij^m. W.

⁴ So in all MSS. The Latin has 'temporalia.'

² none X.

⁵ v^m. W.

³ 4^m. W.

⁶⁻⁶ omitted X.

& norische his gostly broþer, & ȝif ony of hem falle in-to sikenesse oþere freris schullen serue hym as þei wolden be seruyd.

Of penaunce to be putt to freris for synnes.

Capitulum 7^{m.1}

ȝif ony of freris bi tisyng of þe enemye happen to synne deedly þe synnes of whiche it is ordeyned among freris þat þei rennen to here mynystre prouyncial, þe same freris ben holden to renne to hem also sone as þei may wiþ-outen dwellyng. & þo mynystre ȝif þei ben prestis schullen wiþ mercy enyonye hen penaunce, & ȝif þei ben noone prestis make þei to be enyoyned to hem bi oþer freris of þe ordre, as it semeþ to spede most aftir god. & þei schullen be war þat þei be not wraþid and disturblid for þe synne of ony, for wraþe & disturblyng letten charite in hem & oþere.

Provincial ministers to enjoin penance for great sins.

Of þe chesyng of þe general mynystre &² of þe prouyncial chapitris of þe ordre.

Capitulum 8^{m.3}

Be alle freris holden to haue euermore on of þe freris of þis religion a general mynystre & seruauant of al þe breþerhed, & be þei holden to obliche stedefastly to him. & whanne he dieþ þe chesyng of his successour be maad ⁴ of mynistris prouyncial & custodis in þe chapitre of witson tide, in whiche chapitre be þe ⁴ mynystre prouyncial holden euermore to come to-gidre, where euer it haþ ⁵ ben ordeyned of þe general mynystre; & onys in þre ȝeer, or at anoþere terme lasse or more as it is ordeyned of þe forseid mynystre. & ȝif it seme ony tyme to þe generalte of mynystre prouyncial & custodis þat þe forseide mynyster is not sufficient to þe seruyce & comune profite of freris, ⁶ be þe forseide freris ⁶ holden, to whom þe chesyng is ȝouen, to chese hem anoþer in þe name of god to here kepere. Aftir þe chapitre of witson day þe mynystre & custodis may eche bi hem self, ȝif þei wilen & it seme to hem spedeful, in þe same ȝeer in here custodries onys clepe⁷ to-gidre here breþeren to chapitre.

Choice of the general of the Order.

Holding of general chapter.

Of prechours to þe puple.

Capitulum 9^{m.8}

Preche not freris in þe bischopriche of ony bischop whanne þe bischop aȝen seiþ hym, & noon of freris be hardy in ony manere to preche to þe peple but ȝif he be examyned & aprouyd of þe mynystre of þis fraternyte, & þat þe office

Friars not to preach within the diocese of any bishop against his will.

¹ vjm. W.

⁵ hit has W.

² omitted X.

⁶⁻⁶ omitted X.

³ vjm. W.

⁷ calle W.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

⁸ viijm. W.

*[p. 33 MS.]

of prechyng be graunted to hym of þe *mynystre. ¶ Also I moonest & stire þe same freris þat in prechyng þat þei maken here spechis be examyned as chast & to profit & to edificacion of þe peple. Schewyng to hem vices & vertues, peyne & glorie, wiþ schortnesse of sermon. for þe lord haþ¹ maad abreggid word vpon þe erþe.

Of þe monestyng & of correccioun.

Capitulum 10^{m. 2}

Officers to rule mildly,

and friars to be obedient.

Freris þat ben mynystris & seruantis of opere freris schullen visite and moneste here breþeren mekely & charitably, & þei schullen correcte, not commandyng to hem ony þing þat be aʒenst here soule and oure³ reule. And freris þat ben soget owen to þenke þat for god þei han forsaken here owen willes; werfore I comaunde stedfastly to hem þat þei obeche to here⁴ mynystris in alle þingis þat þei han behiʒt to oure lord to kepe, & noon contrarie þingis to here soule & to oure reule. & where euere ben ony freris þat wisten or knewen þat þei may not kepe gostly þe reule þei may & owen to renne to here mynystris, & þe mynystris owe to resceyue hem benygnely & bi charite, and haue þei so muche famularite, or homlynesse, aboute hem þat þei may seie⁵ to hem & do as lordis to here seruauantis. for whi so it schal be, þat mynystris be seruauantis of alle freris. I amoneste & stire in oure lord ihū crist þat freris ben war & flee fro alle pride, fro veyn glorie, enuye and coueitise, & cure & bisynesse of þis world, fro detraccion & grucchyng. & recke not þat⁶ þei ben vnkunnyng to lerne letteris, but vndirstonde þei þat aboue alle thingis þei owen to desire to haue þe spirit of þe lord & his holy werchyng, and euere preie to god wiþ clene herte, & haue mekenesse & pacience in pursuyt & in infirmyte, and to loue hem þat pursuen vs & reprouen & dispisen vs. for oure lord seiþ: loue ʒe ʒoure enemyes, & preien for hem þat pursuen ʒou, and for men þat falsly chalengen ʒow. blissed be þei þat suffren persecucion for riʒtwisnesse, for here is þe kyngdom of heuenys; & who euere lastiþ in-to þe ende he schal be saaf.

þat freris entre not in-to abbeies of nunnes.

Capitulum 11^{m. 7}

Friars not to enter nunneries,

I comaunde stably to freris þat þei haue not suspect compaynes or conseilis of wymmen, & þat þei entren not þe abbeies of nunnes, out take þo to whom fro þe see of apostaille is

¹ haad X.

⁵ see X.; ut dicere possint Lat.

² ix^m. W.

³ hor W.

⁶ omitted X.

⁴ þo W.

⁷ x^m. W.

¹ x^jm. W. ² *Testamentum* francisci W. ³ omitted X. and AA.

from whom he
receives Christ
in the sacrament.

How the Order
was formed.

*[p. 35 MS.]

Friars to receive
nothing; not
even churches
nor dwelling-
places.

Friars are on no
account to get
letters from the
court of Rome.

Any friar who
breaks the Rule
or is a heretic

take bi discrecion goddis sone & þei ben my lordis. & here-fore I do þat I see noo bodily þing in this world of hym, þe heiȝest goddis sone, but his holieste bodi & blood þat þei resceyuen & þei only mynystren to opere. & I wile abouen alle þingis honoure þes holieste preuytes or mysteries, & putte þes holieste names in most precious places, & where euere I fynde his wordis writen in vnlefful placis I wile gedre & preie þat þei ben gedrid & kepte¹ in an honeste place. & we schal worschipen in herte & word alle clerkis of dyuynyte þat mynystren to vs most holy wordis as hem þat mynystren to vs þe holy gost & lif. And after þat þe lord hadde ȝouen to me of freris no man schewid to me what I schulde do, but he þat is hiȝest schewid to me þat I schulde lyue after þe forme of þe gospel: & I in fewe wordis & sympliche maade to write it, & þe lord pope confermyd it to me. And summe comen² to taken þis lif, And þei ȝauen to pore men alle þinges þat þei myȝten. And þei weren *apeied wiþ o cote or kirtil with-ynne forþe & with-oute forþ & wolde not haue more. clerkis schulden seiþ here officis aftir clerkis, but lewed freris schulde seiþ þe pater noster. and we dwelten to-gidre in chirchis, & weren idiotis, & vnderloute to ale men. & I traueiled wiþ myn hondis & wile traueile, & I³ wile þat alle opere freris traueile in labour þe whiche þertyneþ to honeste, & þei þat kunnen not, lerne þei; not for coueitise to take hire, but for ensample to putte away idelnesse; & whanne men ȝeuen vs nouȝt renne we to þe borde of þe lord, axynge almes fro dore to dore.

¶ God schewid to me þis salutacion þat I schulde seiþ, þe lord ȝeue pees to þe, þerfor be freris war þat þei resceyue not in no⁴ manere, neiþer chirchis, ne placis to dwellen onne, ne ony oper þingis þat ben bilded for hem, but as it semeþ holy pouert, þe whiche we han bi-fore seid in þe reule, euer-more dwellynge þere as gestis & comelyngis & pilgrymys. I comaunde sadly to alle freris be obedience þat where so euere þei ben be þei not chargid⁵ to axe ony lettre in þe court of rome, neiþer be hem self ne by mene persone put bitwyxe, wiþ þe blissyng of god. And I wile þat freris obeche to þe general mynystre of þis fraternyte whom it plesed to me to ȝeue þerto, and I wile þat I be so taken in his hondis þat I may not goo or do aȝenst his obedience & his wille, for he is my lord. & þouȝ I be simpul⁶ & sik neþeles I wile euere haue a clerk þat schal do me dyuyne office after þe reule. And þo þat ben founden þat don not þe office after þe reule & wilen varie on oper manere & be not

¹ be putt W.

⁴ any W.

² omitted X. and AA.

⁵ hardy X.

³ omitted X. and AA.

⁶ sinful AA.; Latin simplex.

of ryȝt cristen feiȝ, be alle freris holden bi obedience where euere ȝei ben ȝat, where euere ȝei schulle fynde ony of ȝoo, ȝei schullen presenten hym to ȝe nexte custode of ȝat place where euere ȝei fynden sychon. and be ȝat custode holde sadly bi obedience to kepe hym strongly as a man in bondis day & nyȝt, so ȝat he may not be delyuerid of his hond til he represente hym ¹in his owen persone in ȝe hondis of his mynystre, and be ȝe mynystre holden sadly bi obedience to holde hym bi freris ȝat kepe men nyȝt & day as in bondis til ȝat he represente hym to ȝe ¹cardynal hostiense, ȝat is lord, *gouernour*, *meyntenour* & *corectour* of alle ȝe fraternyte.

to be kept under guard till he is brought to the Cardinal of Ostia.

And seie not, freris, ȝat ȝis is anoȝer reule: for it is a remembraunce, amonestynge, a reprouynge, and my testament ȝe whiche I frere fraunseis, litel, make to my blissed breȝeren, ȝat for ȝis ²we kepe bettere ȝe reule ȝe whiche we han bihiȝt to ȝe lord. & ȝe general mynystre & alle oȝere mynystris & custodes ben holden bi obedience to * adde no ȝing to ȝes wordis ne drawe ȝer fro & rede ȝei ȝes wordis. * [p. 36 MS.]

This is not a fresh rule.

And I comaunde bi obedience to alle my breȝeren, boȝe clerkis & lewid, ȝat ȝei putte not glosis vnto ȝe reule, ne seyng wif ȝes wordis: "so ȝei wilen be vndirstonden," but as ȝe lord ȝaf to me sympliche and pureliche to seie & to write ȝe reule; and vndirstonde ȝe ȝes wordis so symplely and clenly with-oute glose & kepe ȝee hem in to ȝe ende wif holy werchyng. and who euere kepiȝ ȝis be he fulfillid in heuene with ȝe blissyng of ȝe heiȝest fadir, and be he fulfillid in erȝe with ȝe blissyng of his louyd sone, wif ȝe holiest gost confortour, & wif alle vertues of heuenes and wif alle seyntis; and I frere fraunseis, ȝoure litel and ȝoure seruant, conferme to ȝou how euere myche I may wif-in & wif-outen ȝis moste holy blissing. Amen.

The rule to be obeyed literally.

Here endiȝ ȝe testament of seynt fraunseis.³

[Comment.]

But here ȝe menours seyn ȝat ȝe pope dischargiȝ hem of ȝis testament & seiȝ ȝat ȝei ben not holden ȝer-to, for a man haȝ not lordschipe ne iurisdiccio vpon his pere, & siȝ ȝe pope was more ȝan fraunseis he myȝtte not bynde ȝe pope ȝat he ne myȝte dispense & reproue what he wolde. ¶ But to ȝis trewe men seyn ȝus, ȝat freris ben bounden to ȝis testament for many skillis: first fraunseis seiȝ ȝat god schewid hym

The minors say that they are dispensed by the pope from obeying this testament,

and that the pope is above Francis.

Reasons why they are bound to this.

¹⁻¹ omitted W.

² omitted X. and AA.

³ Finis testamenti W.

þis lyuyng and not man; þanne oþer þis testament is of goddis wille or fraunseis is fals þat seiþ so. ȝif it be goddis wille þe pope may not do aȝenst it, ȝif fraunseis be false in þis seiynge his doynge cam of þe fend¹ of helle þat is fadir of lesyngis. ¶ Also fraunseis seiþ þat þis testament is noon oþer reule but þe firste, and þanne as þei taken þe firste reule so moste þei take þe testament, siþþen þei ben al oon. ¶ Also it semiþ þat fraunseis in his laste daies schulde beste knowe þe treuþe & most be in charite to his breþeren, & þan he made þis testament; & herefore it semeþ þat he was a liere & out of charite but ȝif þis testament were acordynge wiþ goddis dom; but what pope or deuy² schulde þanne distroie it? ¶ Also men seyn þat he is cursed þat lettiþ þe riȝtful wille of a dede man. But þis testament is riȝtful wille of dede fraunseis; þanne it semiþ þat þat pope þat lettiþ it & þe freris also ben acursed of god, of fraunseis, and of alle hawen.

They forsake the obedience of God, and obey a sinful idiot.

¶ As to þe substance of the reule þei forsaken obedience of god and obeschen to a synful idiot biddynge þe contrarie of goddis wille, þe whiche synful ydiot is in cas a dampnyd deuy², & so for plesynge of þe world or lustis of here flech þei leuen þe comaundementis of god & don vnriȝtful comaundement of þe fend, & magnyfien more obedience to synful men, & in caas to fendis, þan obedience *to crist þat is euere more medeful; & so þei seyen þat a good þing doon after þe comaundement of god is not of so gret meriȝt as a þing don after þe comaundement of a synful ydiot, & in cas a dep deuy² in helle. but þis newe profession was not vsed of crist & his apostelis but in þe time þat sathanas was vnbounden, as þe apcalips telliþ; and so it semiþ þat þes newe ordris distroien obedience of cristis lawe (bi whiche eche mañ is holden obeche to oþer in þe drede of crist, þat is in as myche as ony techiþ a noþer to don þe wille of god) & magnyfie obedience to synful men, ȝee aȝenst þe preceptis of god. and so as myche as is in hem þei maken a synful idiot & in cas a dampnyd deuy² in helle more than almyȝti

*[p. 37 MS.]

This profession came in only when Satan was unbound.

¹ deuyl W.

² ordeyned W.

god in trinyte, for þei don more aftir his false comaundement þan aftir comaundement of almyȝty god.

¶ To þe secunde part of þe reule wiþ-uten proprete of worldly goodis; siþ propre þing stondiþ most in wille & þei traueilen more for propre worschipe or wynnynge þan for comune profit of cristen men, it semeþ þei don alle aȝenst þis reule; for þei han grete housis propriid to hem self, many costly bokis, & myche hid tresour biried in here houses fro þe comune of cristen men lyuyng in þe world bi gret labor, as god enyoyned adam; & þis tresour is kept proprely to idel men or fendis, siþþen it is geten by false lesyngis, false beggynges, & fals meyntenynge of foule synnes. ¶ Also o strong beggere or flaterere haþ a chaumber for a lord, erl or duk wiþ many preciose iuellis, & anoþer frere haþ nakid sidis & many other myscheues þouȝ he be worþ siche a þousand bifore god. ¶ As to chastite deme men of here bodily chastite, but of gostly chastite it semeþ þat þei ben alle avoutreris, for þei halde religioun þat is maad of synful men bettre þan religion maad of crist hym self, & þei chargen more tradicions or customes maad of here owen errouris þan þe iust lawis & heste maad of almyȝtty god, & þus is gostely matrimonye bitwixe crist & cristen mennus soulis broken, siþ it stondiþ in riȝtfulnesse & mercy & feiþ.

¶ But see now hou freris don openly aȝenst þis reule & testament. also in takynge money many weies; for þei leden wiþ hem a scarioth stolen fro is eldris by þefte to robbe pore men bi beggynges dampnyd of goddis lawe. & seen more ypocrisie of hem: þei wolen telle gold and money & touche it wiþ a sticke or wiþ gloues & a grete cuppe of gold or pece of siluer worþ many markis to drynke noble wyn of, but þei wilen not touche an halpeny or ferþing wiþ þe coyn & armes of þe cros & of the kyng, & þis semeþ for dispit of þe cros or of þe kyng, for a weeg of siluer¹ or a *cuppe of gold þei wolen handil faste, and þe money þat þei robben of pore men bi fals beggynges þei wolen leyn it

As to the rule which forbids them to hold property, they break it in many ways.

Their rich chambers.

They take money in many ways.

They lead with them an Iscariot.

They will count money with a stick,

but will not touch a half-penny with the bare hand.

*[p. 38 MS.]

¹ gold W.

They wear rich
clothing.

vndir here beddis hed at nyȝt. & so of cloþing þei don
aȝenst þis reule in many maneres; for men seen þat þe
kyng or þe emperour myȝtte wiþ worschipe were a garnement
of a frere for goodnesse of þe cloþ, & namely of suche freris
as schulden most kepe pouert of crist & his apostelis, as
ben clepid maistris of diuynyte, but verreily maistris of
errour boþe in techynge & in ensauple, & summe oone haþ
wast cloþis & costi, and a noþer symple frere þat nys not
so gret flaterere nakid or to rent. ¶ As to propre þingis freris
seyn þat þe pope is lord worldly of housis, bokis, iewelis

They slander the
pope.

and al þat þei han, but her semeþ myche venym: first þe
euyll children putten in-to here fadir þe pope þe venym of
worldly lordschipe siþ þei may not haue it for distroynge
of here perfeccioun, & yit þei seyn þat þe pope mot be most
holy & perfyt & nexte sue crist in alle manere vertues, &
þus þei putten a veyn þorn in his feet. As to here kyng

They are untrue
to the king.

þei ben vnkynde & vntrewe, for wiþ-uten his leue¹ or is
conseil þei alien in-to straunge² rewmes, & in caas to oure
enemyes, al þat þei may gete bi robberie of pore men³ &
flaterynge & opere false menes in þe lond þat þei dwelliþ
inne; & so, ȝif þe pope ben enemye to oure lond & sende
enemyes to oure lond, he haþ many stronge houses as
caastelis; & ȝif þei ben his riȝtfully oure kyng may not
warne ne lette his hoste to reste in þo places, & þanne is oure

They spare to
reprove great
men.

lond in gret peril. ¶ As anemtis prechyng, men knowen wel
þat freris wile flatere & spare to reprove scharply synnes
of grete men for drede of los of worldly goodis or frendischipe
or fauour; & so for loue of here stynkyng bely þei laten þe
fend strangle many⁴ soulis, and ȝit dispisen and letten opere
men to preche the treuþe of goddis lawe, laste here synne
were knowen & here pride & worldly wynnynge leid a doun.
¶ And ȝit þei tellen not schortly ne plenerly⁵ þe gospel, & vices
& vertues, & peynes and ioie, but maken longe talis of fablis,
or cronyclis, or comenden here owen nouelries. ¶ As anemtis

¹ love X.

² stronge X. and AA.

³ omitted X. and AA.

⁴ mennus W.

⁵ pleynelly W.

traueile of freris it is knowen hou þei gon ydel fro contre to contre, & fro toun to toun, & fro hous to hous, beggyng needles of pore men, techynge oþere to ben idel, & stelen mennus children to þis ydelnesse, where þei ben tauȝt to lyue in swet of here body bi comaundement of god and bi here owen reule & by ensauple of petir and poule; whanne petir fischid aftir cristis resurreccion, & poul traueilid * wiþ his hondis after cristis ascencion; and seynt austyn techiþ munkis to labore wiþ here hondis, & so doþ seynt benet & seynt bernard. ¶ Also bisiden rome frere menours bi false name pursuen trewe pore freris to deþ, for as myche as þei wolden kepe fraunseis reule to þe lettere in pouert & mekenesse & in grete penaunce, & þerfore, þouȝ þei haue name of franseis freris, þei ben enemys of crist & fraunseis & cruel man-sleeris. ¶ Also, ȝif fraunseis take only þe gospel and no þing addiþ¹ of his owne þer-to, it schulde not be clepid² fraunseis reule but reule of crist or of þe gospel; & ȝif he putte to þe gospel of his owne fyndynge, whi schulde he make þer-of a newe ordre, siþ þe ordre þat crist made him self is most perfit & most liȝt & most siker to geten heuene by, & what goode dede ony man may doo he is holden to don it bi þis most comaundement of god: “þou schalt loue þi lord þi god of ale þin herte, of al þi lif, of al þi þouȝtis, & of al þi stengþes or myȝtis.” what nede is it þanne to make anoþer religion, siþ þat þat crist made is I-nowȝ at þe fulle; & so siþ noone apostle of crist ne angel of heuene haþ ony power but ȝif it be to edificacion & profit of holy chirche, þe pope haþ no³ power to dispense aȝenst fraunseis testament & his reule, siþ þei ben al on, but ȝif it be to profit of holy chirche þat men kepen neiþer his reule ne his testament. Of þis reule & errour myȝte men speke ful myche. But god for his mercy brynge clerkis to cristis clene⁴ religion, siþ it is þe beste on alle weies & most profitable to alle parties. Amen.

Instead of working they live in idleness.

*[p. 39 MS.]

They persecute the true (i.e. the spiritual) franciscans.

God's order bids us do every good thing we can.

¹ asdiþ X. ² calde W. ³ omitted X. and AA. ⁴ trewe X. and AA.

IV.

OF PRELATES.

THIS tract is less orderly in arrangement and fuller of repetition than is usual in Wyclif's work, but some parts of it are worthy of him, and it contains no opinions that are not to be found in his genuine writings. There is a great resemblance between this and the tract on the office of Curates, No. VII. Both have references to the Crusade in Flanders, and are therefore late works of Wyclif, if his at all; while both of them are silent as to his doctrine of the Eucharist, and are comparatively mild in their language as to the Friars, who are not treated as at all worse than the monks. This would be natural enough in Wyclif's earlier years, but is not in accordance with his usual tone after 1380. I incline to think that they were written by an intimate disciple rather than by the master.

As to evidence of date, I have little doubt that the mention of "antierists bullis to maken cristene men to werre with each othere" (p. 73), and of pardons granted "to make discensioun & werris" (p. 82) refer to Spencer's Crusade, although it is just possible that they may point to one of the other occasions on which popes have encouraged bloodshed.

The tone as to persecution is uncertain. The passage (p. 87) "prisonen hem and slen hem *algates in wille*" looks as if the infliction of death for heresy was not yet allowed. There is stronger language in the Sermons and the Trialogus. Yet we are told on p. 79, that lords who support poor priests are cursed and taken to prison "if thei stonden sadde in goddis cause." This may have happened in Wyclif's time, merely as the result of excommunication, but I know no instance of it. Were the tract written much after his death, its tone would probably be fiercer.

I cannot identify the "litel harlot" who "dispiseth the pope and stroieth his lordship," p. 83.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

A leaf is wanting in AA. from end of Chapter XLI. to the early part of Chapter XLIII. "for his entier sorwe of synne."

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I. Prelates are bound to preach, since they take the place of apostles whom Christ ordered to preach. Examples and warnings from Scripture. Wickedness of neglect. Prelates more bound to preach than the people to pay tithes. Duty of making them amend.

- CHAP. II. Prelates will not allow priests to preach without their licence. They permit the new religious to go about preaching lies and fables, but it is on condition that they do not preach against the sins of prelates, and that they pay largely from the money which they extort.
- III. Prelates are heretics, for by their life they set an example of living against Christ's law. Their pomp, litigiousness, luxury and covetousness.
- IV. Prelates rob the king's lieges by taking money for licences to sin. They bribe nobles and jurors to support them, but curse all who try to correct them.
- V. Prelates come to their benefices by simony. Nature of simony. Its prevalence. Common forms of it. Worst in the Court of Rome, and most harmful. Condemnation of simony in Scripture. It is a heresy. Bishops, friars, and curates alike guilty of it.
- VI. Prelates think more of the consecration of churches and ornaments than of consecrating the sacrament of the altar, which they leave to every priest, while they keep the others for themselves. They use these offices as a means of extortion.
- VII. Prelates teach man's law, but hinder preaching of the gospel. Prayer to God to give courage to his servants, and understanding to lords.
- VIII. Prelates care more for money than for men's souls. Witness the sin-rents.
- IX. Prelates live in lechery and lead others into sin. They raise money from poor men, who want it to live on. They publish bulls to encourage wars. They allow friars to go about begging. Thus they kill men's souls.
- X. Prelates lay more stress on their own curse than on God's. They enforce their excommunication by imprisonment. For real sins they sell absolution, but they put true preachers under curse, and condemn them by false witness.
- XI. Prelates deceive men by their false prayers and singing. Prayer without good life useless. God only knows the worth of each man's prayer. Prayers of wicked men are not made useful by the virtue of the Church. If they cannot pray effectively for themselves, neither can they for others.
- XII. Prelates frighten men by their excommunications; forbid true preachers, and persecute those who would support them.
- XIII. Prelates deceive men by indulgences, which have no authority from Christ, and are useless except as a means of extortion. Pardon is wholly in God's hands.
- XIV. Prelates make the way to heaven harder by their new laws. They add also new points to the Creed; as the headship of the pope.
- XV. Prelates exalt themselves above Christ; for he told men to judge him by his deeds, and they say their subjects should not judge them.
- XVI. Prelates stop men from doing God's will, as in saying mass and preaching. They pretend it is to stop heresy, but they are not true judges of heresy, for they neither know nor keep God's law.
- XVII. Prelates refuse obedience and taxes to secular lords. Christ paid tribute to the Emperor. Much more should they who are rich help the land. They set example of rebellion.
- XVIII. Prelates worse than Jews, for they persecute Christ in his members and take blood-money.

- CHAP. XIX. Avarice of prelates, their litigiousness, oppression ; their pomp and war-like ways.
- XX. Prelates teach other men to maintain them in their sins and to persecute poor priests.
- XXI. Prelates set more store by their own laws than by the gospel.
- XXII. Prelates teach that nothing in the church is lawful that is not confirmed by the pope, who is commonly the worst of prelates and antichrist.
- XXIII. Prelates are enemies of peace, counselling war to divert attention from their own sins. Besides advising it, they take part in it.
- XXIV. The worldly and pompous life of prelates an ill example.
- XXV. Money sent out of the realm to bring preferment and to maintain suits at Rome.
- XXVI. Prelates by their invention of new laws declare Christ's laws to be insufficient, and so slander Christ.
- XXVII. Prelates make men assent to their false teaching, and deceive lords so as to make them imprison true men.
- XXVIII. Prelates make men study new laws, and keep them from studying Holy Writ.
- XXIX. Prelates make lords imprison any one who has been under curse for forty days. Lords should make sure that the curse is rightful.
- XXX. Prelates' arguments for their claims to obedience and power are like the arguments of apes and gluttons.
- XXXI. Prelates despoil all classes of men in different ways.
- XXXII. Prelates think more of their parks being broken than of breaking of God's laws.
- XXXIII. Prelates take upon them the state of the apostles, and live contrary to it, so deceiving men like enemies who mount false arms.
- XXXIV. Prelates compel priests to fight in person.
- XXXV. Evils caused by celibacy of priests.
- XXXVI. Prelates silence those who would rebuke them, lest their hypocrisy be known, and they lose their endowments.
- XXXVII. Prelates maintain vicious men in their retinue.
- XXXVIII. Prelates deceive men as to pilgrimages and pardons, and teach them to care more for vows than for God's laws.
- XXXIX. Prelates rob the lower clergy in assessment of taxes.
- XL. Prelates are dumb dogs, who do not warn the flock committed to them, but give it to Satan in exchange for wealth.
- XLI. Prelates crucify Christ and slay his apostles spiritually, and so are worse than Jews.
- XLII. Prelates blaspheme the Holy Ghost by preventing true preaching.
- XLIII. Prelates claim the power of absolution, which God has reserved to himself. They have only power to act as messengers. Yet they lay more stress on their absolution than on God's forgiveness.

Here it telleþ of prelatis.

Capitulum Primum.

* þat prelatis leuen *prechyng*e of þe gospel & ben gostly *[p. 65 MS.] Prelates neglect preaching. manquelleris of mennys soulis, And sathanas *transfigurid* in-to an aungel of liȝt, & ben gostly sodomytis worse þan bodily sodomytis of sodom and gomor. first, crist seiþ in þe gospel of seyn ion þat he was boren & cam in-to þe John xviii. 37. world for þis ende, to¹ bere witnesse to treuþe; also crist Christ came to bear witness to the truth. cam in-to þis world to seke and to saue mankynde, þe Luke xix. 10. whiche was *perischid*. & *certis* crist sauȝd *mannus* soule bi trewe lyuyng in his owen *persone*, & trewe & opyn & fre *prechyng*e of þe gospel, & wilful passion & deþ for He preached and suffered death for preaching, *prechyng*e & *meyntenynge* of þe gospel; & to þis same ende & werk crist ordeyned alle his apostlis & disciplis, boþe and ordered his apostles to preach. bi-forn his deþ & after his resurreccion, to *preche* þus þe gospel to alle men. þanne, siþ prelatis & prestis ordeyned Prelates come in the place of apostles, of good comen in þe stede of postlis & disciples, þei ben alle bounden bi ihū crist god & man to *preche* þus þe gospel. and are bound to preach. ¶ Also crist biddiþ þries to petir þat ȝif peter loue crist þat [John xxi. 15.] he fede his scheep; þat ben cristen soulis; & first fede bi Christ's command to Peter. ensaumples of good lif, þe secunde tyme bi trewe techyng of þe gospel, and þe þridde tyme bi wilful suffryng of deiþ, to make men stable in þe gospel & in hope of blisse: & here-to crist comaunded his disciples to *preche* opynly þe [Matt. x. 27, 28.] treuþe þat þei herden priuely, & drede not men þat turmenten & slen þe bodi, but drede hym þat may putte body & soule in-to helle wiþ-outen ende. ¶ Of þes two gossellis it is cleer þat prelatis þat *prechen* not þus þe gospel louen not crist, but don fully aȝenst his heste, whanne þei leuen for drede of men to teche þe gospel; & þus þe heȝe prestis Warning from Eli. ely was dede for he tauȝte not his children goddis lawe and reþroued not at þe fulle here synnes, & þe arke² or couere of god was conquerid in-to enemyes hondis, & goddis

¹ betere inserted X.

² "whiche" both MSS.

- [1 Sam. iv.] peple ouercomen, and many þousandis slayn in bataile as þe first bok of kyngis telliþ. ¶ And herefore þe holy prophete ysaie criep þat woo is to hym, for þat he was stille and
- [Isaiah vi. 5.] dwelte among synful peple, & telle hem not here synnes, siþ þis is offis of a prophete. also god seþ to prelatiſ bi
- [Ezekiel iii. 18.] ezechiel, þat ȝif a synful man die in his synne & þe prelate telle him not his peyne for synne, god schal seke þe synful mannus bloode, þat is his synne, of þe¹ prelatiſ hondis. ¶ And here-for seiþ poul þat woo is to hym, þat is euerlastyng
- [1 Cor. ix. 16.] dampnacion, but ȝif he preche þe gospel; & siþ cristen men
Man cannot live
spiritually but by
God's word.
*[p. 66 MS.] may not lyue gostly but bi goddis word, *prelatiſ þat wiþ-
drawen þus goddis word fro here sugetis ben cause of deþ
- Prelates that
withdraw it are
murderers. of here soulis, þat is a þousand folde worse þan is deþ of
body, & so þei be worse man-sleeris þan þei þat only sleen
- [Matt. xvi. 23.] þe body. ¶ And siþ petir was sathanas for he wolde haue
They are Satans lettid cristis deþ & saluacion of mannus soule, him wnwytyngge; moche more þes prelatiſ ben sathanas, þat þus myche contrarien cristis wille & sauynge of mennus soulis þoruȝ prechyng of þe gospel, & þei ben turned in-to an
- transformed into
an angel of light. aungel of liȝt, for þei feynen hem in þe stede of apostliſ & worche wiþ þe fend to suffre mennus soulis go to helle; & siþ goddis word, bi whiche men schulden gostly be gendrid goddis sones, is betere þan bodely seed of mān bi whiche þe body of man schulde be gendred, & þes prelatiſ mysusen þis betere seed, þanne þei don more synne þan diden þe
- They are spiritual
Sodomites. sodomytis þat wasted manus seed; for euere þe betre þat a þing is þe worse & þe more abhominable is þe mysusynge
- [Grossetête.] þer-of. & þe grete doctour lyncolne robert grosted groundiþ þis pleynly þat siche prelatiſ þat leuen to preche þus cristis gospel ben more abhominable and enemys of god & his peple þan weren þe cursed men of sodom & gomor. & siþ god seþ bi þe prophete þat euyl preſtis ben cause of fallynge of þe peple, alle manere men ben bounde to amende þis defaute; for ellis þei stonden not in goddis hestis ne charite.
- [Gregory.] & here-fore gregory seiþ þat no man harmeþ more cristis

¹ þere X.

chirche þan he þat haþ þe name of ordre & holynesse and þer-wiþ lyueth euele, for comunly no man reproueþ hym, & men taken gretly .ensample of his synne; & þerfore crist purgid þe temple with his owen hondis, as þe gospel telliþ, in¹ tokene þat ȝif prestis weren good þe peple schulde sone be amendid. & for þis skille trewe men seyn þat prelatis ben more bounden to preche trewely þe gospel þan þes sugetis ben holden to paie here dymes, for god chargiþ þat more, and þat is more profitable to boþe parties & more esy. And þerfore prelatis ben more cursed to cesse of þis prechyng þanne þe sugetis ȝif þei cessen to paye tiþes; ȝe, whanne here prelatis don wel here offis. ¶ Also prelatis ben more bounden to þis prechyng, for þat is comaundement of crist bifore his deþ & eke aftir, þan to seie matynes, masse, euen song, or placebo, for þat is mannus ordynaunce; þanne siþ prelatis ben not worþi to haue dymes & offrynges ȝif þei don not matynes, masse & oþer mannes ordeynyngis, moche more ȝif þei don not þis heȝe ordynaunce of god; & here-fore seiþ crist, ȝif þe salt be fonnȝd it is not worthi ouer þis, but ȝif it be to be cast out & be defoulid of men; þat is ȝif prelatis failen of good lif & techyng, þei moten be þus seruyd of men, for ȝif men vnder hem knowe þis defaute & may amenden it & don not, þei consenten & meyntenen hem in þis grete synne.

Prelates are more bound to preach than their people to pay tithes.

Prelates more bound to preach than to say matins, etc.

[Matt. v. 13.]

Men who can amend prelates' faults and do not, are guilty of abetting them.

Capitulum 2^m.

*Also prelatis letten men to do goddis wille & comaundement, & so þei neden hem to be dampnyd, & letten many to here goddis lawe; for prelatis letten & forbeden prestis to preche þe gospel in here iurdiccion or bischope-riche, but ȝif þei han leue & letteris of hem; & ȝit god comaundeþ & chargiþ alle his² prestis to preche freely the gospel. for alle cristis apostlis & disciplis weren chargid to preche þe gospel, & alle prestis ordeyned of god comen oþer in staat of apostlis or disciplis of crist, as bede & þe popis lawe seiþ; þanne

*[p. 67 MS.] Prelates forbid priests to preach without their leave.

All priests are charged by God to preach,

[Bede.]

¹ & X.

² þes X.

- alle prestis ben chargid to preche þe gospel. Also god seiþ
 [Malachi ii. 7.] be þe prophete, þat lippis of a prest kepen kunnyng of
 goddis lawe, & men seken the lawe of his mouþ, for he is
 an aungel of þe lord of compaynes. an aungel is a messenger,
 þanne siþ þe prest generally is a messenger of god he mot
 schewe his message, þat is þe gospel, in whiche is perfittly
 teld goddis wille; and gregory vpon þe gospel proueþ wel
 [Gregory.] whether they þat eche prest mot preche, haue he litel kunnyng or moche.
 have little know-
 ledge or much.
- ¶ Also gregory seiþ in þe popis lawe, þat who euere comeþ
 to prestod takiþ þe office of a bedele or criere to goo bi-fore
 þe dredful doom¹ of god; and² as in þe olde lawe þe prest
 schulde die ȝif he ne entrid in-to a sanctuarie wiþ-outen
 noyse, so in þe lawe of grace ȝif a prest be doumb of þe
 prechyng he stereþ goddis wratþe vpon hym. & siþ men
 ben gretly cursid þat don aȝenst þe popis lawe, as men seyn,
 & þis is a grete popis lawe, groundid on goddis lawe & reson
 & charite, moche more ben þei cursed þat don aȝenst þis lawe.
- [Jerome.] ¶ Also ierom seiþ þat prestis owen to preche bifore bischopis,
 & þei owen to be glad þerof for þat is here worschipe. ¶ Also
- [Austin.] austyn in a sermon seiþ þat eche man is holden to teche þe
 good þat he can; ȝe, þouȝ he kunne litel. ¶ Also it is a gret
 werk of mercy to teche men þe riȝtte weie to heuene, &
 eche man is holden bi comaundement of god to do werkis
 of mercy; þan is eche prest holden to teche þe gospel, þat
 is þe riȝt weie to heuene. ¶ Also in þe holde lawe a man is
 holde to bryng þe beste of his enemye in-to þe ryȝtte weie;
 moche more is a man holden to bryng his broþeres soulis
 out of synne in-to good weie to heuene ward. And bi þis
 reson alle cristis enemyes weren stoppid to speke aȝenst him
 whanne he helid a sik man vpon þe sabaat day, as þe gospel
 telliþ. ¶ Also þat riche man is out of charite þat helpiþ not
 his broþer in bodely nede, ȝif he may wel, as ioon þe
 euangelist seiþ; myche more is a man nedid bi charite to
 releue his broþeres soule out of myschif of synne, ȝif he
 haue kunnyng of goddis lawe. ¶ Also men demen * it a grete
- [Exodusxxiii. 4.]
- [Mark iii. 4.]
- [1 John iii. 17.]
- *[p. 68 MS.]

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.

charite to saue a *mannus* bodi fro deþ or drynechyng; it is moche more charite to saue *mennus* soulis fro deþ of synne & of helle bi trewe *prechyng* of goddis lawe. ¶ A lord, what deuēlis blyndnesse and cursednesse is þis, whanne þe prelat or curat is chargid of god, vp peyne of his owen dampnacion, to teche þe gospel & comaundementis of god to alle his sugetis, & here-wiþ can not teche þus, or may not for worldly bisynesse, or wole not for idelnesse or negligence, þan to lette oþere to preche frely þe gospel of crist & saue *mennus* soulis; but þanne þei senden oþere, þat tellen lesyngis, fablis, & cronyclis, & robben þe peple bi fals beggyngis, & dore not telle hem here grete synnes & auoutrie ¹lest þei ¹lesen wyynyng or frendischipe. ¶ Certis he were a cruel fadir þat myȝtte not ȝeue his owene childre bred þouȝ þei perisheden for hunger, & ȝit wolde not suffre anoþer man to helpe þes children bi weie of mercy; but moche more cruel ben þes prelatis & curatis, þat kunnen not or may not or wolen not ȝeue here gostly children gostly bred of þe gospel, þouȝ here soulis ben in neuere so gret myschef, & ȝit forbeden & cursen oþere men ȝif þei wolen for mercy ȝeue here breþer techyng of goddis lawe, boþe treuly & frely, *with-uten* beggyng as crist biddiþ. ¶ It semeþ þat syche prelatis & newe religious ben a-ferd of cristis gospel, for it approueþ not but distroieþ worldly lordschipe of prelatis & feyned holynesse of newe religious; siþ cristis religion þat he made for prestis is þe beste, most *perfyte*, most esy, & most siker. And oure ihū wolde haue no worse religion in prestis þan þat þat he made himself. ¶ Also it semeþ þat sich iurisdiction of prelatis, þat þus letten cristis gospel, dryuen away god fro *mannus* soule, & *vertuous* lif & charite, & bryngeþ þe fend in, and cherischiþ hym & synnes & debatis & werris. neþeles men supposen þat newe religious han leue of worldly prelatis to preche here fablis and lesyngis & to robbe þe pore peple bi beggyng, vpon this condiccion, þat þei preche not spedily aȝenst symonye, extorsions & oþere orible synnes of false

Madness of those who do not teach the gospel and who stop others that would,

while they send about men who tell fables and lies.

He is a cruel father that will not feed his hungry children nor let others do so.

Prelates and the new religious fear Christ's gospel.

These new religious are allowed to deceive and spoil the people, so long as they do not preach against simony,

and give prelates
much gold.

These prelates
are proctors of
the fiend.

prelatis, & þat þei ȝeue þes worldly prelatis gold in gret quantite, þat þei robben of pore men. ¶ And þus þes worldly prelatis dampnen hem self þes newe religious, hem self, & also oþere prestis þat wolden preche þe gospel trewely & frely as moche as in hem is, and þe peple also; siþ þei suffren not þe peple to here goddis word frely, but lesyngis, fablis, and þerto to¹ be robbid, & þus þes prelatis ben procuratours of þe fend, enemyes of crist, & traitours to² his peple.

Capitulum 3^m.

Prelates teach
against Christ
and his apostles,
*[p. 69 MS.]

both in word and
example.

Luxury and
pomp of their
life,

Also comunly prelatis ben false prophetis & heretikis, for þei indede *seyn heresie & techen aȝenst ihū crist & his apostlis; for aȝenst cristis wilful pouert þei techen in dede worldly coueitise & moche wast in worldly goodis, & aȝenst cristis mekenesse þei techen in-dede pompe & pride of þe world & of here statis, and aȝen cristis bysynesse in prechyng & preieyng & traueile bi contrees þei techen in-dede vanyte & idelnesse, & ben ȝeuen to glotonye & worldly bisynesse, & haunten courtis of lordis & worldly plees, & ben doubt fro þe gospel & tellen here owen lawis to magnyfie here power & pride & coueitise, & couchen in castelis as lordis; & wiþ all þis þei seyn þat cristis & his apostlis lif & here proude lif acorden, & seyn þat þei lyuen as crist & his apostlis diden.

their fat horses,
their plate,

their crowds of
attendants,

¶ A lord! siþ prelatis comen in stede of apostlis, hou may þei for schame lyue so contrariouly aȝenst here pore lif, in wast seruauntis, in grete fatte hors & nedles, in shynyng vessel, in gret aray of cloþis; ȝe, more þan many grete lordis. certis in ensaumples of here lif þei techen errour aȝenst crist & his apostlis, siþ þei seyn þat þei suen crist and apostlis in manere of lyuyng. O lord! what tokene of mekenesse & forsakyng of worldly riches is þis; a prelat as an abott or a priour, þat is ded to þe world & pride & vanyte þer-of, to ride wiþ foure score hors, wiþ harneis of siluer & gold, & many raggid & fittrid squyeris & oþere men swerynge herte & bonys & nailis & oþere membris of crist, & to spende

¹ omitted X.

² of X.

wiþ erlis & barons & here pore tenauntis boþe þousand markis their lawsuits.
 & poundes to meyntene a false plee of þe world, & forbarre
 men of here riȝt. & ȝit þes ypocritis seyn þat þis is worschipe
 of holy chirche, but *certis* þei lien, but ȝif þei clepen be
 contrarie name þe deuelis chirche to be holy chirche, as þei They say that
this is worship
of holy church,
but they must
mean the devil's
church.
 clepen hem self men of religion & þat þei forsaken þe world;
 but *certis* þei distroien holy religion & magnyfien veyn They say they
are religious
and forsake the
world;
but they have all
sorts of good
things, who
before profession
could hardly get
bean bread;
now they are
hard to please.
 religion, of whiche seynt Iames spekiþ, & forsaken traueile
 & peyne & dissesse of þe world, & han lordschipsis, rentis,
 gaie houses & costly, & welfare of mete & drynk, þere þei
 myȝtten vnneþe before haue bene-bred & watir or feble ale.
 ȝe, wiþ moche care & traueile now vnneþe ony mete¹ or wyn
 may serue & plese hem, but likerousnesse & lustis of here
 bely han now alle þe bisnessis, and deuocion & holynesse &
 penaunce litel or riȝt nouȝt. Of þis veyn pride of religious
 it semeþ wel þei ben not bok of cristis pouert & holynesse,
 as þei seye in here wordis, but bok of pride, coueitise, vanyte
 & oþere synnes, to disceit² of goddis peple & distroiynge of
 his lawe. ¶ harde crieþ seynt bernard aȝenst pompous prelatiſ Bernard's rebuke
to proud prelates.
 & axeþ hem þus: ȝee³ prelatiſ, what doþ gold in ȝoure brideliſ
 & oþere araies, where it kepe hem fro cold; we perischen
 for hunger * and cold, seyn pore men, oure goodis þei ben þat *[p. 70 MS]
 ȝe wasten from vs, þei ben drawen cruelly aȝenst mercy, &
 þus ȝee⁴ don tweie euele þingis, on for ȝoure pride & wast
 of pore mennus goodis ȝe gon to helle, And we pore men
 perischen in þis world for ȝoure vanyte & pride. & siþ þe lif
 of prelatiſ is bok & ensauple of sugetis, as grosted seiþ
 wiþ many moo, & þei lyuen so opynly in pride, coueitise &
 idelnesse, passynge alle oþere, þei ben open heretikis & They are open
heretics.
 stronge, þat han no schame of here heresie, for heresie in
 fals lif meyntened is werse þan heresie only in herte or
 wordis, and for sclaudere þat þei ȝeuen to oþere men bi
 here cursed lif god him self curseþ hem in þe gospel & seiþ
 þus: who to þat man bi whom comeþ a sclaudre, þat is A cause of
scandal.
 ensauple to do synne, it spedith to him þat a mylneston of

¹ nite X.² dissect X.³ þe X.⁴ þei X.

[Matt. xviii. 6.] assis be hangid in his necke, & þat he be dreynt in-to Gregory. depnesse of þe see. þat is, seiþ gregory, it spedif to euyl prelatiſ þat ʒeuen ensaumpele of synne to here sugetis þat þei weren in lowere staat of worldly labour & þer-wiþ wer dampnyd to depe helle; for þan þei schulden haue lesse peyne þan to lyue¹ euele in þe heʒe staat & teche oþere men do synne, for þei ben worþi as many deþes as þei ʒeuen euyle ensaumples of synne to here sugetis. But lord, who is nowe so coueitous abouten worldly lordschipsis & temporal goodis as oure prelatiſ, for comunly alle here visitacion, alle here sacramentis and ordriſ ʒeuynge & halwyng of placis & vesty-mentis & blissyng is don² for coueitise & worldly pride & dignyte; alle here preue spekyng & prechyng & techyng in scolis is for coueitise & magnifyyng of here worldly staat: who is more idel in goddis seruyce, more in glotonye & wastyng of pore mennus goodis in schynyng vesselis & oþere costis? & ʒif þei preien, þat is wiþ-uten deuocion to plese þe peple, & comunly for offryng, & cotidian distribucion, & stynkyng lif of lecherie, robberie, pride, coueitise, glotonye; þat þei raþere stiren god to wraþe & vengauunce þan to mercy & pite, as goddis lawe, austyn & gregory & oþere seyntis witnessen. but, lord, siþ heresie stondiþ most in cursed lif, were ben more heretikes, siþ þei ben most synful in opyn & preuy cursed lyuynge; but where schal ony be deppere dampnyd in helle?

It were good for evil prelates that they had lived in a lower state; they should be damned to less pain.

Covetousness of prelates.

All their offices are done for money or pomp.

They pray only for show.

Capitulum 4^m.

Prelates allow men to live in sin, if they will pay for leave. Prelatis also robben þe pore lige men of þe king bi fals extorisions taken bi colour of holy correccion, & ʒeuen men leue to dwellen in synne fro ʒer to ʒer, fro seuene ʒer to seuene ʒer, & comunly al here lif, ʒif þei paien bi ʒere twenti shillyngis or more or lesse, and þus bi sutilte of sathanas þei han *founde newe peynes orible & schameful to make men paye a gret raunson, to ʒeue gold & baþe hem in lustis of synne as swyn in feen. And men seyn þat summe bischopis

*[p. 71 MS.]

Some bishops are said to get 2000

¹ leve X.

² ben X.

getiþ in o yer two þousand mark or poundis; & ȝif he laste or 3000 marks a
 twenty ȝeer bischop wiþ þis robberie, It wole come to sixti year by these sin-
 þousand mark þat he robbiþ of þe kingis lige men. ¶ And þus Thus they sell
 þes wickede *prelatis* sillen *cristene mennus* soulis to sathanas souls to Satan,
 for money, for whiche soulis *crist* schedde his precious herte
 blod vpon þe cros. And here-fore þei ben worse þan iudas and are worse
 for many skillis, for þei sillen *crist* in a manere as iudas dide than Judas.
 wiþ more dispit & more stynkyng coueitise, & ȝit þei hiren They bribe lords
 lordis to meyntene hem in þis cursednesse, & ȝeue pore and jurors.
mennus goodis to hem for þis ende, & hiren also iurouris &
opere gentil men of contre to forswere hem wyttyngly on
 þe bok & not to putten hem vp for extorsioneris & þeues;
 & whanne þei schulden be principal dukis in *crist* oost to
 fyȝtte & teche *opere* men bi here ensaumples to fyȝtte aȝenst
 synnes, as false traitouris þei turnen þe bak & techene
cristene men to offre hem redy to þe deuelys sacrifice. a
 pore man þei constreynem to synne bi manas, chydyng & They make poor
 losse of catel & sclaunderinge, but ȝif he wolen consente to men sin.
 hem & faouere hem in here wrong lif; & ȝif he wol do so,
 þanne he is an holy sone, & haþ ȝiftis & worldly frendschipe
 & fauour & *anticristis* false blissyng & goddis trewe curs.
 And þei flatren lordis whanne þei meyntenen þes *anticristis* They flatter lords
prelatis to robbe here tenauntis, & seyn þei worschipen þanne who support
 god & holy chirche, & ȝeuen lordis grete ȝiftis of gold & them,
 iuelis & pardons, & licence to synge in oratories & *opere* and give them
 veyn þingis, and ȝif lordis wolen distroie þes synnes of rich gifts with
 robberie & sathanas marchaundise, þanne *anticristis* *prelatis* pardons and
 wolen sclaunderen hem, curse hem, & entirdite hem & here privileges;
 londis.¹ And þus alle men ben conquerid to þe fend almost, but they resist
 & þus þes cursed pilatis not *prelatis* ben verray *anticristis*, any attempt of
 procuratours of sathanas, & traitours of ihū *crist* & his lords to correct
 peple. them.
 Pilates not
 prelates.

¹ here lordis X.

Capitulum 5^m.

Prelates usually enter upon their benefices by simony.

Gregory.

Simony is of three kinds: coming to a benefice (a) by gift of money,

(b) by favour of others rather than by merit, * [p. 72 MS.] (c) by worldly service done to others.

They do their office neither in good life nor preaching;

they do not even comply with the pope's law.

Title of grace needful to them.

At their death they are not fully contrite,

or they would make restitution;

but this happens seldom or never.

Also *prelatis comunly ben symonyentis in here entre, in processe of here benefis, & in þe ende of here lif, & þanne in alle þes tymes þei ben heretikis, so þat alle oþere synnes ben holden for nouȝt in comparison of þis symonye, as þe beste part of þe popis lawe seiþ. for, as gregory & þe popis lawe seiþ, in þre maneres is symonye don. First whanne a man comeþ to a benefis of þe chirche bi ȝifte of money or worldly goodis bi hym self or bi oþere menes.*

¶ *þe secunde tyme whanne a man comeþ þer-to bi preiere of lordis or ladies or oþere men more than for kunnyng of goddis lawe & holy lif. ¶ þe þride tyme whanne a man comeþ þer-to bi worldly seruyce of lordis & ladies, of prelatis, or oþere myȝtty men more þanne for good lif and kunnyng; but who comeþ hellis to prelacie? & in processe þei mys-penden pore mennus goodis, in wast metis & festis of ryche men & pride of þis world, & don not here office comunly neþere in good lif ne trewe prechyng, & resignen not here benefis goten þus by symonye; & þat þei moten algatis do ȝif þei schullen be saaf vp þe popis lawe, & neuere in wille to hauen it aȝen but ȝif it be bi riȝt title, & algatis confirmation of god bi titel of grace is nedeful to hem. And þat comeþ not but bi verray repentaunce of synne don bi-fore, & bi trewe lif & techyng & meyntenynge of goddis lawe vpon here kunnyng & myȝt. & in here endynge þei han not comunly ful contricion for here synnes, as for mys-pendynge of pore mennus goodis, for false extorsions, for sillyng of sacramentis, for norischyng & meyntenynge of oþere men in synne, as pride, coueitise, & glotonye & alle oþere: for ȝif þei hadden þanne contricion þei schulden restore þes wickid extorsions vp here myȝt, & warne oþere men of þe synnes in whiche þei hadden norischeden hem; but þis comeþ seldom or neuere, & þerfore it semeþ þat þei dien heretikis but ȝif god helpe more in the laste poynt of partyng of þe soule & body, & ellis þei dien dampnyd*

fendis of helle. ¶ But lordis & ladies here mosten ben wel war, for ȝif þei ȝeuen benefis to clerkis fore here worldly seruyces, princypali as for kechene clerkis & countyngge or daunsyngge, for palfreis or keuercheris, gold or oþer worldly seruyce, it is foul symonye & cursed on boþe parties, as goddis lawe and þe chirche & holy seyntis techen. ¶ And also ȝif þei ȝeuen a benefis for men ben of here kyn, or for fleschly loue, or worldly frendschipe, or ellis for þe clerk¹ is manly to þe lord in gay cloþinge, in grete festis, gret archerie, or ony oþere veyn iapis more þan for þe worschipe of god & profit of mannes soule, it is styntyngge symonye bi-fore god, as lawes and seyntis techen. ¶ And here ben þre poyntis of treson to god & his peple; þe first is þat lordes & ladies ben tratours þat holden curatis in worldly offices fro þe soulis þat þei han cure of; for god ȝeueþ hym lordischipis & presentyngge of chirchis to meyntene goddis lawe & help trewe prestis to teche his peple þe gospel & maundementis of god, & ȝif þei holden wiþ goddis tresour curatis in here worldly seruyce or chapellis, & letten hem to kepe cristene soulis, þe whiche crist bouȝt wiþ his precious blod, þei ben foul traitours to *ihū crist & to þe peple þat þei disceyuen þus; but ȝit more treson is in clerkis þat coueiten & taken þis worldli office wiþ² cure of cristene soulis and may not do hem to-gedre, for þei schulden teche þe lordis þe treuþe of goddis lawe & also þe peril in þis poynt, & don nouȝt, for ope of grettere benefices or for flaterynge of here lordschipe; but the moost tratourie of alle stondiþ in fals confessouris, þat schulden telle þe treuþe of goddis lawe & don not for lesyngge of worldly lordschipe, frendeschipe, fauour or worldly wynnyng, boþe of þe lord & his meyne & of þe false curat þer-to; & þus þe lord or the lady hireþ costly a fals iudas to his confessour, þat suffriþ him & lediþ him þe heiȝe weie to helle. ¶ Also prelati ben ful of symonye whanne þei mynystren here sacramentis or ony gostly office for money or þank or preiynge of men of þe world or for

Lords and ladies should know that it is simony to give benefices for worldly service,

or personal favour.

Three points of treason to God and his people.

1st. When lords and ladies keep curates from their cure to employ them in worldly office.

*[p. 73 MS.]

2nd. Worse treason is in the clergy who take these offices.

3rd. The worst treachery is in false confessors.

Prelates are full of simony when they administer sacraments, etc., for worldly reasons.

¹ celrk X.

² omitted X.

They are bound
to give freely
as they have
received.

Simony of the
court of Rome is
most harmful.

All people run
thither.

Some die by the
way.

They take much
treasure out of
the land

to pay for bulls.

The money paid
to Rome is sup-
posed to be more
than three-
fifteenths,

in return for
which we get a
little lead and
much mischief.

It is simony to
pay firstfruits for
the gift of a
church,

*[p. 74 MS.]

and the coin is
lost to the realm.

To take money
for pardons is
simony.

ony worldly *seruyce*. For crist biddeþ hem ȝeue al þis frely as þei taken it freely of god, & þe prophete seiþ he is blissed þat kepiþ his hondis clene fro alle manere ȝifte, & he is cursed þat doþ þe werk of god wiþ neegligence or fraude. ¶ And it is a foul fraude to [do] þis gostly office for worldly reward or for þanke or preisyng of synful men, whanne þei schulden do it for goddis worschipe frely & helpe of mannus soule.

¶ But ȝit symonye of þe court of rome doþ most harm, for it is most comune & vnder most colour of holynesse, & robbiþ most oure lond of men & tresour; for alle nacions of this cristendom rennen þider as to welle of trewþe and gostly helpe, & þei ben most disceyued, for þei wenen þat þere is no symonye for holynesse of þe court of rome. & many

kunnyng men & able ben dede bi þe weie, what wiþ *traueile* & cold & oþere myschefis & enemyes, & ofte raunsonyd, & beren out of þe lond moche gold to raunson, to spende bi þe weieze; ȝe to spende at rome many ȝeris & daies, to paie for selis or bullis, to plede for benefices, offryngyus, dymes, & many mo causes, to paie þe pope þe first froytys, & cardynals & bribouris to spede here nedis, & for pardons, quyenals, priuylegies, for assoilyngis of woves, & many feyned iapis,

þat men supposen alle þes passen þre fiftenþes; & alle goþ out of owre lond comunly in-to enemys hondis, & for al þis comeþ a litel ded lede, & mayntenynge of false plee, & strif, & goddis curs, & symonye, & heresie. for ȝif it be symonye a clerk to *serue* a lord for a benefice & þe lord to resceyue þer-

fore gold or gold worþ, bi þe same skil it is symonye to *serue* þe pope in sich a straunge *traueile* and contre, & ȝeue hym

gold for his lede, & þe frystefruytes for ȝifte of a chirche; & ȝit whanne a lord haþ þe gold for his presentynge þe gold dwelliþ stille in *oure lond, but whanne þe pope haþ þe furste

fruytes þe gold goþ out & comeþ neuere aȝen. And so for pardons, ȝif þei ben ouȝt worþi þei mosten be free, & to take

money for hem is to selle goddis *grace* and so symonye, & þan boþe parties ben cursed of god & man; & so anticrist haþ forbarrid þe fredom of goddis lawe in schriftis, masse,

syngynge, & oþere deuociouns & takiþ gold of men to brynge
 hom sum del to þis fredom, & so robben hem bi ypocrisye
 as ȝif it were not leful to do profit to ¹ mennus soulis wiþ-out
 dispensynge of anticrist. But now to schewe þe malice &
 cursednesse of symonye; first, almyȝtti god dampneþ it in
 þe olde lawe, crist in þe gospel, & is apostlis after þe sendynge
 of þe ² holy gost; first, whanne þe wickid kyng ieroboam
 made false maunmetis & stockis and worschipide hem for
 almyȝtty god, bi-cause þat he selde þe prest-hode of þes
 false goddis for worldly ȝiftis god almyȝtty distroied hym
 & alle his seed. also, for giesy toke money & cloþis of
 naaman whanne helise þe prophete his maistir hadde helid
 hym, þe leper of naaman cleuyd to hym & his generacion
 euere aftir, in tokene þat gostly lepre, þat is heresie, ³ schulde
 dwelle wiþ alle syche as taken ⁴ money or ⁴ money worþ for
 gostly offices; ȝe, wiþ-uten couenant makynge. also god
 seiþ bi þe prophete malachie to þe iewis þat his wille is not
 to hem: “For þer nys noon þat shittiþ frely þe doris of þe
 temple.” þanne god chargiþ more þe betre offis as makynge
 of sacramentis & ȝeeuynge of ordris, þat men plese hym
 not but ȝif þei don hem frely. ¶ Also crist in þe gospel drof
 out of þe temple hem þat selden & bouȝten þer-inne, ȝee,
 wiþ his owen hondis, þat we reden not of many oþere synful
 men þat he tok so moche vengauunce in his firste comynge,
 in tokene þat he schärpliēst schal ponysche hem þat don
 symonye. Also petir seyde to symon magus; þi money be
 wiþ þe in-to loos of dampnacion, for þou gessedest to haue
 goddis ȝiftee þorouȝ money. ¶ Also symonye is contrarie to al
 þe hole trinyte & to eche persone þer-of; first to þe fadir,
 for whanne god wole not and may not brynge vnable men
 in-to benefices of þe chirche for his riȝtwysnesse & vnablete
 of hem self, þei presumen to comen in bi symonye; as ȝif
 þe peny & falsnesse of þe fend were more þan þe myȝt of
 þe fadir of heuene. also ihū crist is dore bi whiche men
 schulde entre in-to offices & benefices of þe chirche, &

Antichrist sells
a little of the
freedom which
he has taken
away.

Condemnations
of simony in
scripture.

Jeroboam pun-
ished for selling
the priesthood,

Gehazi fortaking
gifts of Naaman.

Malachi i. 10.

Christ purged
the temple.

[Acts viii. 20.]
Simon Magus.

Simony is con-
trary to all the
persons of the
trinity.

The devil's
money and deceit
are put above the
Father's will.

Christ is the door,

¹ of X.

² omitted X.

³ here ne, in both MSS.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

but simoniacs
enter another
way.

*[p. 75 MS.]

Simoniacs sell
the Holy Ghost.

Arius.

Pope's law
ordains horrible
penalties against
simoniacs.

Prevalence of
simony.

Friars forsake
Christ's poverty,

and allure young
children by
simony.

Curates.

Simony reigns
in all states of
the church,

symonyentis wolen come in bi anoþer weie of falsnesse, as ȝif þei wolden putte away ihū crist, & be more maistris & more witty þan he. Also symonyentis as *myche as in hem is sellen þe holy gost, & maken him þral or bounden to synful men & fendis, whanne þei sillen & biggen þus his ȝiftis; & þerfore þei ben worse heretikis þan þe cursed heretik arrian & his secte þat made þe holy gost lesse in myȝt þan þe fadir & þe sone, & seruant to hem boþe as þe lawe seiþ. For as þe synne of sodom was moost aȝenst kynde & so most synne in þo olde lawe, so is symonye as doctours seyn most aȝenst grace & most synne in þe lawe of grace. And þerfore in þe popis lawe decrees & decretals symony is generaly clepid heresie, & orible peynes ordeyned aȝenst men þat don symonye on ony manere bi hem self or oþere mene persones, bi here wille & consent, & in sum cas hem vnwyttynge. ¶ Also generaly prelatis regnen in symonye, as bischopis, munkis, chanons, & freris, & lesse curatis; for bischopis, munkis & chanons sillen þe perfeccion of cristis pouert & his apostlis, & also trewe prechyng for a litil stynkyng muk or drit, & worldli lordschipe, & wombe ioie and idelnesse, & freris forsaken þe perfit pouert of crist and his apostlis for pride of þe worldly staatis & flaterynge þer-to and ypocrisie & beggyng to geten esely & plenteuously catel of lordis & ladies & comunes, & to geten ȝonge childre to here feyned ordre by symonye, as aplis, purses & oþere iapes & false bihestis, & bi false stelyng aȝenst here frendis wille, and aȝenst goddis comaundement. And lesse curatis forsaken holy lif & trewe prechyng of crist & his apostlis for bisynesse & worschipe of þe world & for glotonye & drunkenesse & lecherie; & ofte bi open symonye comen to here benefices, & dwellen stille in hem whanne þei ben vnable to teche goddis lawe in word & dede; & þus symonye regneþ in alle staatis of þe chirche, boþe in statis groundid of crist & in oþere groundid of foolis as ȝif þei weren statis of holy chirche, but þei ben statis of þe wicked chirche brouȝte in by lesyngis & ypocrisie.

And siþ þe kyng & lordis ben chargid of god to distroie and king and
þis synne & opere, & mowen don it & don it not, þei ben lords consent
consenteris & fautouris þer-of. to it.

Capitulum 6^m.

Also prelatiſ halden þe halwyng of dede stonys or dede Prelates think
erþe & opere ornamentis of þe chirche, as vestymentis, cloþis, consecration of
chalis, & oile, & crem, more worþi þan þe halwyng and churches, chrism,
blissynge of þe sacramentis of þe auter, þat is verray cristis etc., of more
flech & his blood; & so it semeþ þat þei holden dede stonys worth than con-
& dede erþe & roten cloþis more worþi þan cristis owen secration of the
precious body & his blood. ¶ For þei holden to hem self host;
halwyng of auter stonys, chirchis & chirche ʒerdis & opere for they keep
cloþis of þe¹ chirche as more worþi * & precious, & suffren the former to
pore prestis, be þei neuere so vnkunynge and vicious themselves, and
anemtis god so þat þei speke not aʒenst þe synne of prelatiſ, let any priest
to make þe sacrament of þe auter eche day, as ʒif þat were make the sacra-
lesse worþi & lesse precious. ¶ Also þei wolen suffre an auter ment of the altar.
vnhalwedid, or a chirche or a chirche ʒerde suspendid & no * [p. 76 MS.]
masse seyð þer-inne, ʒe fourtene nyȝt, ʒe a moneþ, ʒe longe
ynowþ, ʒif fourty pens ben bihynden of ten mark or ten
pound; & alle þis þei taken bi extorsions, bi þefte & symonye,
& hauen no mercy, be þe peple neuere so poer, neuere so nedy,
& neuere so deuout to here goddis² word or² seruyce; but
where ben worse tirauntis & heretikis? & þus in alle here
dedis of gostly offices þei cursen hem self & þe peple also,
for þei don not þat þat longiþ to here office for stynkyng
symonye, & maken þe peple to consente & meyntheyne here
synne of symonye & heresie, for þei don many soutil menyſ, They will leave
as graunten pardon & here feyned blissyng to halwyng of these offices un-
chirchis, to make þe peple wilful to bere hem vp in here done if their fees
synne. ¶ And ʒif ony man for drede of god & his conscience be not fully forth-
aʒenstonde þis extortion and robberie & symonye he schal coming.

Simony in this
matter.

Prelates perse-
cute those, who
oppose their
simony.

¹ omitted X.

²⁻² omitted X.

his bodi to prison or to deþ, & sumtyme be in hate, in strif & enuye, & ful of his wrecchid lif. & ȝif he consente wilfully to þis foule symonye þanne he is dede in synne, as poul seiþ, & ȝif he aȝenstonde it, what bi cautelis of anticrist & malice of þe fend, he schal be *tourmentid* bi wrappe & vnpacience & traueile & peyne of his bodi & loos of his catel, þat vnneþis schal he be sauȝd but nedid to be dampnyd; & þus it semeþ þat þei þat schulden be most principal helperis to cristene mennus soulis þei ben most principal *procuratours* of þe fend to encombre hem in synne.

God keeps these offices from poor priests to save them from hell.

and ȝit it semeþ þat oure goode god kepiþ þes veyn offices & feyned sacramentis fro his pore prestis þat þei gon not þe brode weie to helle for mysusynge of hem.

Capitulum 7^m.

Prelates care more for worldly goods than for Christ's gospel.

Prelatis also setten more pris bi a litel styngynge¹ drit of worldly goodis þan þei don bi þe moste holy gospel of ihū crist; for þe grete bysynesse þat þei han abouten worldly goodis & þe litel traueile & studyng abouten cristis gospel prouen wel þat þei louen more þis worldly muk þan þe gospel of ihū crist; for þe dede doyng is proff of loue, as gregory seiþ, & here-fore þei preisen & techyn mannus lawis & here owen tradiciouns to gete þe peny by, but þei leuen & dispisen þe gospel & letten it to be prechid, for þe gospel techiþ þe holy lif of crist & his apostlis & dampneþ þe cursed lif of þes worldly prelatis, & þei commaunden þat no man schal *preche þe gospel but at here wille & lymytacion, & forbeden men to here þe gospel vp peyne of þe grete curs. but sathanas in his owne persone durste

Gregory.

*[p. 77 MS.] They will not let the gospel be preached but at their will.

Satan quoted scripture, and so showed it more respect than they.

neũere do so myche dispit to crist & his gospel, for he aleid holy writt to crist & wolde haue proued his entente þer-bi. & siþ it is cristis conseil & comaundement to prestis generally to preche þe gospel, and þis þei moten not do wiþ-outen leue of þes prelatis, þat in cas ben fendis of helle, þanne

¹ styngynge AA.

prestis may not do *cristis* conseilis & *hestis* wiþ-*outen* leue of fendis. A, lord ihū! for þes synful foolis, & in cas fendis of helle, ben more myȝtti & witti þan þou, þat trewe men may not do þe wille wiþ-*outen* auctorite of sicke fendis.

¶ A, lord god almyȝtty, al witti & alle ful of charite, hou longe wilt þou suffre þes *anticristis* to dispise þe in þyn holy gospel & lette þe helpe of *cristene* mennus soulis?

Endeles riȝtful lord, þis þou suffredest for synne generally Appeal to God for help.

regnyng among þe peple, but endeles merciful & goode lord, helpe þi pore wrecchide *prestis* & *seruauntis* to fore þi peple to haue loue, drede & reuerence to þi gospel, & lette not to do þi worschipe & wille for fals ferynge of *anticristis* & fendis of helle. ¶ Almyȝtti lord god and merciful & endeles witty, siþ þou suffredest petir & alle apostlis¹ to haue so grete drede & cowardise in tyme of þi passion þat þei flowen alle away for drede of deþ And for a litel pore wommannus vois, and aftirward by confort of þe holy gost madist hem so stronge þat þei weren afferd of no man, no peyne ne deþ; helpe now bi ȝeftis of þe same holy gost þi pore *seruauntis* þat al þer lif han ben cowardis, & make hem stronge & bolde in þe cause to meyntene þi gospel aȝenst *anticristis* & tirauntis of þis world. & graunte grace to oure lordis alle to meyntene þi gospel & þin ordynaunce, & specialy to seke þi worschipe & myȝttily distroie synne; for to þis office þou hast ordeyned lordis. ¶ Almyȝtti lord, it semeþ now to² foolis of this world þat þi cause is ouercomen and *anticrist* haþ þe victorie, & pore men, lord, doren not abide þi *seruyce*; but now lord, for glorie of þin owe name, & for sauynge of *cristene* soulis whom þou bouȝttest wiþ þin precious herte blood, & for distroyng of boost & pride of *anticrist* & his þat now ben so heiȝe & myȝtty, graunte þi *seruauntis* grace to laste trewe in þe gospel & preche it trewely in word & dede; & þi lordis to meyntene it styfly aȝenst *anticristis* clerkis; & þi comunes, lorde, to kepe þin *hestis* & knowe *anticristis*

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

disceit, & clenly take þi gospel in reuerence & lette not for false drede of anticrist & oþere fendis. so be it, lord.

Capitulum 8^m.

Prelates care more for money than for Christ's blood.

*[p. 78 MS.]

If men's souls go to hell, no matter, so they get their penny.

They are sorry when men reform and cease to pay sin-rent.

Also prelatiſ setten more pris bi þe roten peny þanne þei don bi þe precious blood of ihū crist, for þe ende of schedyngge of *cristis bloode was to saue mannus soulis & it was pris for hem; þanne as þei louen more þe roten peny þanne þe sauynge of cristene soulis, so þei louen more þe roten peny þan þe blood of ihū crist, & in tokene þer-of þei ben besy boþe nyȝt & day to gete þe peny wiþ falsnesse, cautelis & tirauntrie, but of mennus soulis is left care; ȝif þe peny fayle þei ben woode for wraþþe & sorowe, ȝif mennus soulis gon to helle bi brekyngge of goddis comaundementis no warde, so þat þe peny come faste to fille here hondis & coffris. & herefore men seyn þei maken marchaundise wiþ money & mennys soulis to sathanas, for þei ȝeuen men licence to dwelle in synne for annuel rente as longe as hem likiþ, & þus sathanas getiþ soulis to helle for þe roten peny; for men seyn þat cayphas bischopis ben sory whanne men forsaken here olde synnes and paien nomore here annuel rente. ¶ And seyn þat þei may not holde good hous bi siche men, as þouȝ þei wolde sende þousande soulis to satanas for to haue moche roten money & a proude name in þe world of gret housholdyng.

Capitulum 9^m.

Prelates kill men spiritually.

Loose life of prelates,

imitated by curates

Also prelatiſ killen men gostly, ȝeuyngge euyl ensauple & disceyuyngge pore men of here almes, & wiþ-drawyngge goddis word bi whiche þei schulden lyue gostly, for ensauple of pride, coueitise, wraþþe, vnmercy, vanyte, glotonye & lecherie þei ȝeuen to alle men aboute; & manye of þes synnes ben so open þat it nedith no more to declare hem, but of lecherie men seyn þat many prelatiſ ben ful þer-of & of þe moste cursed spices þer-of, þat it is schame to writen it but more to done it in dede; & lowere curatis taken ensauple at hem

& seyn, whi may not we haue lemmannus siþ þe bischop haþ so manye? & sugetis taken ensauple at here curatis, boþe and laymen. weddid men & sengle. & þus prelatis bi þis cursed ensauple sleen in als mychel as in hem is alle manere men, for þei dorn not for schame of her owen synne sadly amende oþere synful, ne wiþ-stonde wronges of souereyns þat þei don to pore men. ¶ And here-wiþ prelatis disceyuen¹ pore men of here almes, for bi fals pardon þei maken men to ȝeue here nedi liflode to here cathedral chirches þat han no nede, & make þe pore men to hope of more þank of goddis mercy to don here almes to riche houses & riche men more þan to don it to here pore neiȝeboþeris þat ben bedrede, febil, & crokid & blynd, & þer-wiþ han nouȝt of here owen. And certis þis is worse þefte þan to robbe hem as an owtlawe doþ. For he takiþ comunly gold or siluer, but þer prelates taken *boþe of pore men & disceyuen hem in feiþ, hope & charite, & also þei suffren oþere false pardoners disceyuen þe peple for a litel money, & lesse curatis haunten þis false craft. ¶ Also þes prelates bi extorsions and maistrie taken þe litel good þat þei schulden lyue bi þat þei geten bi gret swoot of here body, & þus, as god seiþ of tyrauntis, þei taken here skyn fro þe bak, & eten & drynkyn mennus blood, whanne þei be raueine & ypocrisie disceyuen hem of here goodis bi whiche here bodely lif schulde be susteyned, & whiche goodis þei gaten bi hard traueile & wastyng of flech & blood; & þus þei ben manquelleris & irreguler bi-fore god & his aungelis. ¶ Also þei prechen not cristis gospel in word & dede bi whiche cristene men schuld lyue holy lif in charite, but blaberen forþe anticristis bullis to maken cristene men to werre eche wiþ oþere in hope to wyne heuene bi sicke werris, & ȝit þei letten trewe men to teche treuli & frely cristis gospel & his comaundementis, but þei senden newe ypocritis to preche fablis & lesyngis & to flāteren men in synne, & to robbe þe pore peple bi fals beggyng dampnyd of goddis lawe, & ȝit þei maken þe peple to erre in bileue & to trowe

Prelates dare not for shame correct men of sin,

nor oppose oppression.

*[p. 79 MS.]

Prelates take poor men's livelihood;

Micah iii. 2.

publish bulls encouraging men to fight with each other.

¹ disceyuem X.

þat crist beggyd þus als þei don; but certis þis his an open heresie aʒenst cristis gospel & his lif, & as þe olde lawe & þe newe schewyn pleyndly; & þus þes prelati killen mennus soulis bi sclaunder of here owen euyl lif, bi disceit of almes, & suffrynge of false techeris & false robberis of þe peple.

Thus they kill men's souls.

Capitulum 10^m.

Prelates lay more weight on their own curses than on God's.

Curses enforced by imprisonment.

Absolution may be bought.

True teachers of God's law put under curse.

*[p. 80 MS.]

Unjust rules of evidence.

Ouere þis prelati chargen more here owen cursyng, þat is many tymys fals, þan þe moste riȝtful curse of god almyȝtty. And here-bi þei menen & schewen in dede but falsly þat þei ben more þan almyȝtty god in trinyte. ¶ For ȝif a man be acursed of prelati, ȝe wrongly, a-noon alle men ben tauȝt bi hem to flee him as a iew or a sarsyn, & ȝif he dwelle fourty daies in here curs he schal be taken to prison. But þo þat ben cursed of god for bregynge of his hestis, as proude men, enuyous, coueitous, glotons & lecherouse, ben not ponyschid þus, but holden vertuouse & worþi & manly men; & so goddis curs is seit at nouȝt but wrongful mannes curs is chargid aboue þe cloudis. And ȝit þouȝ a man be cursed of god & of a prelat also trewly, ȝif he wole ȝeue gold or money at a false mannus wille he schal be assoild as anemtis men, þouȝ he dwelle in his synne & þanne in goddis curs. ¶ But see now þe mysusyng of mannus curs; ȝif a trewe man displese a worldly prelat for techynge & meynthyng of goddis lawe, he schal be sclaunderid for a cursed man & forboden to teche cristis gospel, & þe peple chargid vp *peyne of þe grete curs to flee & not heren s[i]ch a man for to saue here owen soulis; & þis schal be don vnder colour of holynesse; for þei wolen seie þat siche a man techiþ heresie & bryng many false witnesses & notaries in his absence, & in presence speke no word, & þei feynen þis false lawe, ȝif þre or four false witnesses hirid bi money seye sich a þing aʒenst a trewe man, þan he schal not be herd, þouȝ he wolde proue þe contrarie bi two hundrid or þre; & þes false men seye in here doynge þat crist was lafully don to þe deþ, & susanne also, for bi sich witnessis

þei weren dampnyd, but cristene men bileue techiþ þe contrarie. & bi þis false lawe þei may proue heretikis whom euere þei wolen; ȝe, crist & alle his apostlis & alle his martirs & trewe men in þis world, & proue eche kyng in cristendom forsworn & no kyng; but certis god techiþ in his lawe þat o trewe man, as danyel dede, schal conuycte two false prestis; & þe prophete hely conuycte eiȝte hundrid & mo of false prestis & prophetis of baal. & þes prelatis wolen distroie al goddis lawe þat techiþ hou false witnesse schullen be ponyschid, for þei wolen not haue hem conuycted of here falsnesse bi mo trewe men; & ȝit whanne a man is falsly cursed of a prelat, ȝe þouȝ þe prelat be a deuyl of helle, he schal not be assoilid til þat he swere to stonde to here dom þou it be aȝenst goddis lawe & his conscience. & þus þei ben fully contrarie to goddis dom & ryȝtwisnesse, for ȝif a man haue terespasid neuere so aȝenst god he wole assoile him for verray contricion wiþ-outen siche sweryng or charyng of vnresonable þingis, but þei falsly enhaunsen hem aboue god almytti. ¶ þus it stondiþ of mannis curs; apostlis of crist hadden power to take mennys bodyes to sathanas to traueilen hem whanne þei weren rebelle aȝenst goddis hestis til þei weren meke aȝen for peyne & for woo, & so to saue þe soule; but nowe anticristis clerkis cursen þe soule in-to helle as þei feynen, but þe body is neuere þe more traueilid. & certis þes ben cruel fadris þat þus violently cursen here children in-to helle, not for rebelte aȝenst god ne his lawe, but for cristene men wiþ-stonden þe prelatis coueitise or his pride, or for þei techen & meyn-tenen þe gospel of ihū crist. ¶ Also whanne þei cursen for here coueitise & here owen vengauunce þei cursen hem self, as þe lawe seiþ, for þei bent out of charite aȝenst god & man. ¶ Also whanne þei cursen a man þat meynteneþ goddis lawe paciently & stably god blisseþ aȝenst here cursyng, but þei blynden so þe peple þat goddis blissyng is sett at nouȝt, but here false curs is drede more þan god almyȝtty. Also whanne þei blissen a man þat meynteneþ hem in here

By such rules
any false charges
may be proved.

1 Kings xviii.

An excommuni-
cated man not
absolved except
on submission,
although wrong-
fully cursed.

1 Cor. v. 5.
Christ's apostles
gave men's
bodies to Satan
to save their
souls

Antichrist's
clerks curse
the soul.

They curse them-
selves really.

*[p. 81 MS.] *cursed* *lif god him self curseþ þat man, as god seiþ bi þe
 They mislead the people. prophete, but þei blyndyn so þe peple þat here false blissyng
 is magnyfied & goddis riȝtful curs is not dred, & þus þei
 putten goddis dom & blissyng & cursyng bihynde & setten
 hem at nouȝt, & magnyfien here owen false dom and blissyng
 & cursyng aboue god almyȝtty: but in oþere placis is more
 of þis matere.

Capitulum 11^m.

Prelates deceive men by vain prayers and new song,
 do not fulfil their duties,
 but live in luxury and pomp.
 Also *prelatis* disceyuen lordis & alle cristene men bi veyn
 preieris of mouþ, & veyn knackyng of newe song & costy,
 for bi title of preire þei han many worldly lordschipis &
 many parische chirchis *appropriid* to hem, & don neiþer office
 of *prelatis* as *cristis* disciplis diden, neiþer office of lordis as
 þei owen to do bi goddis lawe, neiþer þe office of *parsones* ne
 vekeris to here parischenes; but lyuen¹ in pompe & pride,
 coueitise, & in wraþþe, slouþe & in ydelnesse, & stenkynge
 lecherie, glotonye & drounkenesse, & gret ypocrisie, and so
 techen þe fendis armys of synne & distroien þe clennesses of
 cristis lif as moche as þei may. preiere stondiþ principaly
 Prayer consists chiefly in good life, Austyn. in good lif, & of þis preiere spekiþ crist whanne he seiþ in
þe gospel þat we mosten euere preie; for austyn & oþere
 seyntis seyn as longe as a man dwelleþ in charite so longe he
 and in desire to do God's will, preieþ wel. ¶ Also preiere stondiþ in holy desir to do goddis
 wille, & of þis spekiþ goddis lawe & seyntis ful myche.
 and in word. ¶ Also preiere stondiþ in word, as comunly men speken, & þis
 is nouȝt worþ but ȝif it be don wiþ deuocion & clennesses &
 Prov. xxviii. 9. holynesse of lif. ¶ For holy writt seiþ þat his preynge is
 abhomynable þat turneþ away & heriþ nouȝt þe lawe; þat
 is to seie, þat fulfylliþ not goddis lawe in his lif. And of
 Isaiiah i. 15. siche vikedes men seiþ god bi his prophete: whanne ȝe schulle
 multiplie ȝoure preieris y schal not here ȝou. ¶ And god seiþ
 Mal. ii. 2. bi þe prophete to suche men: y schal warrie or curse to ȝoure
 Prov. xv. 8. blissynges, & god seiþ bi salamon þat þe sacrafices of wicked
 Austin. men ben abhomynable, & austyn seiþ in many placis þat ȝif
 þou lyuest in glotonye & dronkenesse, what euere þi tonge

¹ lyuem X.

sowneþ, þi lif blasphemeth god; & gregory seiþ whanne he Gregory.
Prayer of wicked
men abominable. þat displeseþ is sent for to preie, wiþ-outen doute þe herte of him þat is wroþ is stirid to werse wraþþe. A lord, siþ prelatiſ ben so fer fro goddis lawe þat þei wolen not preche hem-self ne suffre oþere men to preche þe gospel trewely & frely, hou abhominable is here preire bi-fore god almyȝtty. lord, siþ prelatiſ witte not where here preiere be acceptable or dampnable, whi magnyfien þei it so moche & sillen it so dere? for a lewid mannus preiere þat schal be sauȝd is wiþ- A good layman's
prayer better
than a bad pre-
late's.
*[p. 82 MS.] outen mesure betre þan þat prelat þat schal be dampnyd, & siþ no prelat whot where he schal be dampnyd, whi silliþ * he his cursed preiere to þe lewid man so dere? ¶ And þer-fore Worth of prayer
known only to
God. god kepith to his owne knowynge þe worþynesse of mannes preiere, for men schulden not vse marchaundise of symonye þerby; for god techiþ vs be seynt poul ȝif a man resceyue vnworþily þe sacrament of þe auter þat man resceyueþ his 1 Cor. xi. 29. dampnacion. And siþ prelatiſ hondis ben ful of blood, boþe of quellyng of men wiþ here owen hondis sumtyme, & bi wille & fals conseilynge to wronge werris, & ful of synne, as symonye, extorsions & robberie, & of meyntenynge in synne for ȝer to ȝer for money, hou schal god here hem? siþ he seiþ nay hym-self bi þe prophete: foule ben oure lordis blent to meyntenen open traitours of god, bi gret cost of rentis & lordischipis & ȝifte of grete benefices, for here stynkyng & abhomynable blastis & lowd criynge; for bi þer grete criyng Fanciful music of song, as deschaunt, cowntre note & orgene, þei ben lettid fro studynge & prechyng of þe gospel; & here owene hinders them
from preaching
the gospel. fyndynge vp, þat crist & apostlis spoken not of, as is þis newe song, þei clepen it goddis seruyce, & magnyfien it at þe fulle, but good lif & techynge of þe gospel þei setten at nouȝt. And ȝit crist comaundiþ þat most of alle þingis in þis world; & þus þei þenken it ynowȝ to kepe here owene fyndyngis and to traueilen aboute hem, þou þei leuen þe ordynaunce of god & studynge of his lawe, & þus it is verrefyed, but on an euyl manere, þat seynt poul seiþ: whanne þe presthod is translatid, it is nede þat þe lawe be Hebrews vii. 12.

translatid; for whanne presthod stod in holy prestis of¹ lif & studiouse & kunnyng, þanne was holy writt ynow; to hem & studied & kept in dede wiþ gret reuerence; but now, whanne presthold stondeþ in peny clerkis & stewardis of lordis houses & ladies & ydiotis & symonyentis & proude wrecchis ful of all manere synne, it is nede to haue newe lawes maad of synful foolis to colouren þis synne by and to gedre gredely tiþes whanne þei don not here office; for goddis lawe helpeþ hem not her-to but dampneþ here pride, symonye, coueytise & oþere synnes. ¶ And ȝit anticristis clerkis feynen þat þou; synful prelatis & cursed ben not herd in here preiere for here owen holynesse, ȝit preiere of² sicke is herd in vertu of holy chirche; but þis dremyng nys not groundid in ony place of holy writt, for god seiþ generally þat þis preiere is abhominable þat turneþ away & heriþ not goddis lawe; & comunly suche cursed prelatis ben no part of holy chirche, in cas þat þei sullen be dampnyd; also syche cursed prestis dispisen god in his face, hou schulde god here hem þanne, siþ in cas þei ben fendis *of helle? ¶ Also god heriþ not sicke cursed men for hem self, hou schulde he þanne here hem for oþere men, whanne charite schuld bigyne at hem-self. ¶ Also in þe olde lawe god tok gret vengauce of hem þat offreden oþer fier þan god ordeyned in his sacrafice, & þis fire was token of charite, þat who euere dede ony sacrifice to god wiþ-uten charite schulde not ben acceptid, but vengauce schulde come on him oþer gostly or bodily; but þe fend blyndiþ men bi syche false colour to tristen in ypocritis preieris, & sumtyme in preieris of fendis, & not to amende hem of here synne but rapere to meyntene hem þer-inne; & þus is oure peple disceyued bi veyn preieris of synful ypocritis, & holy writt not knowen ne kept, but vanyte, pride & oþere synnes ben meyntened, & holi lif of prestis & oþere men is dispised.

Priests given to secular office, as stewards, etc.

Antichrist's clerks say that the prayer of such is heard by virtue of holy church,

but God does not hear the wicked
*[p. 83 MS.]

when they pray for themselves.

Charity should begin at home.

Thus the people are deceived by vain prayers.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

Capitulum 12^m.

Prelatis also feren cristene men bi here false censures, as suspendynge, cursynge and enterditynge, þat þei kepe not goddis lawe & his ordynaunce; for whanne prestis wolden gladly lyue wel aftir þe gospel, & preche goddis lawe & dispise & distroie synne, þanne worldly prelates, for drede of here owen symonye & extorsions of pore men, comaunden prestis to preche not wiþ-uten here leue, & þanne prestis schullen neuere gete leue or ellis swere þat þei schal not preche aʒenst þe grete synnes of prelatiſ. And ʒif prestis prechen trewely & frely þe gospel of crist & reprouen generally synne, þes emperours clerkis þat stryuen aʒenst cristis lyuyng wolen somone hem fro contre to contre; & ʒif þei dwellen wiþ cristene peple & techen¹ hem goddis lawe & don not aftir here wrong heest, ¶ þei wolen suspenden pore prestis fro masse & prechyng & alle goddis seruyce, & curse hem & prisone hem bi þe kingis power; & so trewe prestis schullen be cursed & prisoned for þei don frely werkis of mercy & charite & comaundement of god, & leuen þe contrarie comaundement of a synful fool & in cas of a maistir deuyſ of helley. ¶ And ʒif lordis wolen helpe pore prestis in riȝt of goddis lawe, & bryngge proude worldly clerkis to mekenesse & pouert, as god comaundiþ hem in his lawe, þei schullen be suspendid from alle goddis seruyce and here londis entirditid & þei cursed & taken to prison ʒif þei stonden sadde in goddis cause, & þes feyned þeues seruen of þis, to forbede men to do goddis seruyce & his comaundement & profit of here soulis for feyned drede² of anticrist & so maken men more to dreden anticrist & his peynes, & in caas synful foolis & deuelys of helle, þan *almyȝtty god in trinyte & his offense, & to lese þe blisse of heuene; & þus anticristis prelatiſ don more harm to cristene men & maken hem more to breke goddis hestis þan þe deuelis in helle, þat neuere weren men. but aʒenst þes feyned censures men schulden ben armed wiþ feþ of þe

Prelates frighten men by false censures,

forbidding them to preach unless they swear not to preach against the sins of prelates.

Persecute true preachers.

If lords support true priests, their lands are put under interdict,

and they sent to prison.

*[p. 84 MS.]

Men should withstand such cen-

¹ techem X.

² dredre X.

sures in God's behalf. gospel, þat þe more þat þei forbeden men do goddis wille, þe more strong schulden þei be to do it; & drede not here curs, for þanne god blisseþ hem; & aʒenst bodely peyne be armed wiþ pacience & charite & hope of heuently blisse; & þan anticristis power schulde soone be brouȝt doun & holy writt knowen & kept & meyntened; but goddis lawe¹ is þis, þat prelatis preche to synful men þe foulnesse of here gretee synnys and horrible peynes of helle, & hou soone þei may geten mercy of god in þe blisse of heuene for verrey contricion. And ȝif þei wolen not leue here opyn synnes for al þis, þanne lordis schulden ponysche here bodies in prison or by loos of catel, for þis is lordis office as petir & poul techen. Sumtyme men weren forboden of trewe prestis to vse & do sacramentis in open cursed lif, & þat is trewe suspendynge. But nowe goode men ben suspendid fro doying of goddis hestis til þat þei paien a gret tribuyt to anticrist or his officeris. But þoȝ a man be neuere so openly cursed of god he schal be suffred ȝif he wil paie a rente to anticrist or hise, pouȝ he neuere so foule dispise god & dampne his owne soule & dysceyue þe peple. & þus alle þes feyned censures ben anticristis panter & armes, to lette trewe men fro we geuyce of god almyȝtty and to make men to forsake god in his lawe for drede of anticrist and fendis of helle.

Lords should punish those who will not leave their open sins.

Formerly men of evil life were forbidden to minister sacraments.

Now a priest may live as he likes if he will pay a rent.

Capitulum 13^m.

Indulgences. Also prelatis disceyuen foule cristene men by feyned indulgences or pardons & robben hem cursedly of here money; for þei techen men þat for staciones of rome & for ȝeuyng of almes aftir synful mennes wille þei schullen haue þousandis of ȝeris of pardon, & also pardon wiþ-uten noumbre to mannys vndirstondynge. & þis pardon is forȝeuenesse or remyssion of peynes whanne men ben verreyly contrit of alle here synnes bi vertue of cristis passion & martirdom, & holy merit is of seyntis þat þei diden more þan was nedful

Pardon from superfluous merits of saints

¹ omitted X.

for here owene blisse. but þis crist tauȝte neuere in al þe not taught by Christ or his apostles. gospel & neuere vsed it, neiþer petir ne poul or ony oþer apostle of crist; & ȝit þei myȝtten, couden, & weren in most charite to teche & vse þis pardon ȝif þer had ben any sicke, for in crist was alle manere of good lore & good lif & charite, & most aftir in his apostlis; & siþ crist fond & tauȝtte *al þat is nedful & profitable & he tauȝte not þis *[p. 85 MS.] pardon, þann þis pardon nys neiþer nedful ne profitable.

¶ Also alle men þat ben in charite ben partyners of cristis All men that are in charity are partakers of Christ's passion. passion, & of alle goode dedis fro þe bigynnynge of þe world til þe last ende þer-of, bi þe most ryȝtful delyng of ihū crist as moche as it is ryȝtful, & more schal no man haue for no grant of ony¹ creature of god; þan for þis popis graunt or bischopis neuere þe more of pardon. þanne men ben grete foolis þat bien þes bulles of pardon so dere, & Men are great fools to buy these bulls. maken hem more bisy to geten hem þan to kepe þe hestis of god & to ȝeue here almes to þe most pore & nedi neiȝeboris; for it semeþ þat þei ben out of feiþ, hope & charite; for þei tristen to haue more þank to do here almes aftir synful mennus wille & techynge, ȝe to ryche houses or ryche men þat han no nede, þan for to do here almes aftir cristis techynge & to most nedy men. ¶ Also ȝif þe day of doom The day of judgment may come before these pardons have expired. come bi-fore þes þousand ȝeer of pardon come out, þanne þes pardons ben false, for aftir þe dom schal be no purgatorie; but no man wot hou soone þe doom schal come; neþeles þe pope & his officeris in þes indulgences presumen to ben euene wiþ god in knowynge certeynly þe comyng of þe dom & in departyng of meritis to whom þat hem likiþ. But boþe þes ben enproprid to god, & þan it is blasphemye for ony creature to take þis to hym as doþ þe pope wiþ his meyne. ¶ Also it semeþ þat þe pope & his ben The pope is wanting in charity if any one remains in purgatory. out of charite ȝif þere dwelle ony soule in purgatorie, for he may wiþ ful herte wiþ-uten ony oþer cost delyuere hem out of purgatorie, & þei ben able to resceyue suche helpe siþ þei ben in grace; þan ȝif he delyuere hem not out

¹ no X.; but corrected in margin.

of purgatorie him lackiþ charite, & ȝif he haue not power to delyuere alle þan is he out of charite & disceyuere of mannus soule, siþ he techiþ þat his gostly tresour es enȝles meche, & is neuere þe lesse þouȝ he partid it generaiy among alle.

Man cannot know what God's judgment is.

¶ Also it passeþ mannus knowynge what is goddis dom to suche soulis, þanne it semeþ a gret pride for a synful man to make hym certeyn & maistire of goddis dom þat he knowiþ not.

These pardons are given for money.

¶ Also þes pardons gon not for charite but for worldly drit as it semeþ, for ȝif pardon schulde be grauntid it schulde be graunted for to make pees & charite, & not for to make discencion & werris, & o cristene man to slen his broþer; &

They should be given to make men better.

for to stire men to kepe goddis hestis, not to do affir singuler wille or worldly profyt of synful men þat seken here owene worschipe or worldly wynnynge more þan sauynge of cristene soulis; & for to seie þe pater noster þat crist made hym self, & not for singuler preieres made of vs self *for loue of an erþely kyng; but in al þis is þe contrarie don as men seyn in dede, wherfore it is al out of charite & þan it is nouȝt worþ.

*[p. 86 MS.]

Pardon, as a spiritual gift, should be given freely.

¶ Also ȝif þis pardon be an heuenely ȝieste & gostly it schulde be ȝeuen frely as crist techiþ in þe gospel, & not for money ne worldly goodis ne fleshly fauour; but ȝif a riche man wol bie dere þe bulle, he schal haue a bulle of

A rich man may buy a thousand years.

pardon wiþ þousand ȝeris þouȝ he be cursed of god for his synful lif, & a pore bederede man þat haþ no money & may

A poor bedrid man that can't go on pilgrimage gets none.

not traueile to rome or to suche anoþer place, he schal haue no pardon of þe pope, þouȝ he be holy & ful of charite: þan siþ þis pardon schulde be frely ȝouen, ȝif þer ony suche be, it

They say that the payment is for the seal.

is þefte [&] roberie to take þus myche gold þer-fore; but here ypocritis seyn þat þei taken no þing for pardon but for þe

Our country pays thousands of pounds for a little lead.

bulle þat is selid: certis a litel deed leed costiþ many þousand pond bi ȝere to oure pore lond, sikire þei disceyuen þe peple

They sell the goose for nought and charge for the garlick.

& iapen hem, for þei sillen a faat goos for litel or nouȝt, but þe garlek costiþ many shillyngis. ¶ Also þis feynd pardon

disceyueþ many men, for riche men tristen to flee to heuene

Pardons make rich men dread sin less.

þer-bi wiþ-uten peyne & þer-fore dreden synne þe lesse, & of verrey contricion & leuyng of synne & of doynge almes to

most nedy men is lytil spoken of, for ȝif it were soþly teld þis pardon schulde be sette at nouȝt. gret falsnesse is þis to magnyfie þe popis power so mychil in purgatorie þat no man here can teche bi holy writt ne reson, siþ we seen in þis world þat a litel harlot dispiseþ þe pope & stroieþ his lordischepe, & ȝit he doþ al his myȝt, alle his witt, & alle his wille, to be vengid vpon sicke a pore harlot. þane it semeþ for many skillis þat þis feyned pardon is a sotil marchaundise of anticristis clerkis, to magnyfie her feyned power & to geten worldly goodis, & to make men drede not synne, but sikirly to walwe þer-inne as hogges; & merueile it is þat synful foolis doren graunte ony þing of meritis of seyntis; for al þat euere ony seynt dide may not brynge o soule to heuene wiþ-uten grace & myȝt of cristis passion, & alle meritis, þat ben medeful dedes, of alle seyntis but only cristis ben not euene worþ to þe ioie of heuene, as poul seiþ; & siþ god grauntiþ to eche man part of alle medeful dedis als mochel as it is worþi, no man schal haue more part of þes dedis for alle þes bulles, & neuere þe lasse þouȝ no man graunte sicke part ne sicke bullis; & þes feyned pardons maken men to tristen more in grauntynge of a synful man, & in cas of a deuyl of helle, þan in þe riȝtfuleste graunt of houre lord ihū crist. almyȝtty god for his endeles mercy distroieþ þis pride, coueitise, ypocrisie & heresie * of * [p. 87 MS.] þis feyned pardon, & make men þisi to kepe his hestis & sette fully here triste in ihū crist. Amen.

Wrong thus to exaggerate the pope's power.

Pope's weakness on earth.

No saint by his merits can bring one soul to heaven.

God grants merit to men without regard to bulls.

Capitulum 14^m.

Prelatis also maken þe weie to heuene hardere þan crist made it, & so letten men to go to heuene & þer-fore ben cursed of god. For þei entren not hem self into þe kyngdom of heuene & letten hem þat wolden, as crist seiþ in þe gospel, for þei make many newe lawes of hem self, & chargen men to studie hem & kepe hem more þan þe gospel; & siþ þe gospel & holy writt is occupacion ynowȝ for men

Prelates make hard the way to heaven,

Matt. xxiii. 13.

by new laws of their own making.

in þis lif, þe more þat men be¹ occupied abouten mannys lawis þat expounen not þe gospel, þe more þei ben drawn fro þe gospel & þe lesse knowen þat & þe worse kepen it.

They add new points to the creed—
Mark xvi. 16.

as the pope's headship of the church.

¶ Also *prelatis* maken many newe poyntis of bileue, & seyn þat it² is not ynow³ to bileue in ihū crist & to be cristened, as crist seiþ in þe gospel of mark, But ȝif a man bileue þat þe bischop of rome be heuyd of holy chirche. And *certis* þe apostlis of ihū crist constreynenden neuere ony man to bileue þis of hem self, & ȝit þei weren certeyn of here sauynge in heuene; hou schulde þan ony synful wrecche, þat wot neuere where he schal be dampnyd or sauýd, constreyne men to bileue þat he is heuyd of holy chirche? *certis* þei constreynen men sumtyme to bileue þat a deuyl of helle is heuyd of holy chirche, whanne þe bischop of rome schal be dampnyd for his cursed endynge in synne.

He may be a devil.

Capitulum 15^m.

Christ bade men to judge him by his works.

John vii. 24.

Prelates say that their subjects ought not to judge them.

2 Cor. xii. 2.

Also *prelatis* magnyfien hem self abouen ihū crist god and man. For ihū crist comaundid & tauȝte opynly þat men schulden not ȝeue credence to hym but ȝif he dede þe werkis of þe fadir of heuene. But oure *prelatis* chalengen þat we ȝeue credence to hem³ where þei don wel or euyl. Also crist seiþ to þe iewis of him self þat þei schullen deme a riȝtful doom & not after þe face. And in his passion tyme crist bade a synful harlot & cursed to bere wittnesse of euyle in cas ȝif crist had seid eny euyle. But oure *prelatis* þat don euyle boþe in dede, speche & þouȝt, crien kenely þat sugetis schullen not deme hem, þouȝ þei don opynly aȝenst charite. also poul biddiþ þat his sugetis demen þat þing þat he seiþ after þat he was rauyschid in-to þe þridde heuene; but oure *prelatis* wolen not þat we deme here seiynge, þouȝ it be contrarie to goddis lawe opynly, & *certis* þis is þe deuyl cast of helle to distroie þe treuþe of holy writt & þe lif of ihū crist & his apostlis, and to coloure pride & coueitise

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

& symonye & extorsions as moche as euere þei wolen, for bi here cast men schullen not reprove hem þer-of, what synne euere þei don.

Capitulum 16^m.

Prelatis also constreynen men to *cesse & do not þe wille & hestis of god, but ȝif þei han leue of goddis enemys, & in cas of deuelis of helle. For ȝif prestis wolen seie here masse & techen þe gospel in a bischopis diocise, a noon he schal be forboden but ȝif he haue leue of þat bischop, & he¹ schal paie comunly for þat leue myche money or ellis swere þat he schal not speke aȝenst grete synnes of þat bischop & oþere prestis & here falsnesse. And ȝit it is a grete werk of charite & mercy to teche men þe riȝtte weie to heuene, & þes men schullen nouȝt doo wiþ-uten leue of þe bischop, þouȝ he be neuere so proud, neuere so coueitous & cursed for symonye & extorsions, & many tymes sich a bischop schal be dampnyd, & þanne, as crist seiþ, he is a deuyll. þan it is verefied þat a cristene man schal not do þe wille of god withouten leue of goddis enemye, & of a fend of helle; as ȝif þe leue & þe comaundement of god were not ynowȝ to don his wille, but ȝif a man haue leue of sicke a cursed creature. And ȝif sicke a cursed creature² seie nay, goddis wille schal ben vndon & his lawe & wille vnknownen and not kept. And þis is don for drede of loos of here worldly pride & coueitise, & of worldly lordischipis þat þei han aȝenst cristis lawe & his techyng & his owen lif and his apostlis; but þis forbedyng is colourid by holynesse, for, as prelatis feynen, pore prestis wolden teche heresie for þei knowen not goddis lawe; but certis þes prelatis demen heresie alle þat is aȝenst here lykyng & lustis of here flech; & þei ben ful vnable to teche þe treuþe of goddis lawe, for þei studien not þer aboute & lyuen contrariouly þer-to; wherefore þe holy gost techiþ hem not al soþe, but þe spirit of lesyngis steriþ hem to lette knowy[n]ge of goddis lawe & sauynge of soulis vnder colour

*[p. 88 MS.]

Prelates prevent men from doing the will of God,

As to say mass, or teach, without leave of the bishop,

though he may be a very devil.

It is pretended that this is to stop poor priests preaching heresy. They call all they do not like heresy.

The spirit of lies stirs them to hinder the knowledge of God's law.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

of holynesse, for þei demen bi-fore þat men wolen teche heresie; as ȝif þei weren euene wiþ god knowynge mennys hertis. And ȝif pore men seyn þe soþe þat no man may aȝen seie, þan prelatiſ seyn þat it is ¹seyd for euyl entent & so hyndren þe treuþe & taken vp hem þe dom þat is ²reseruyd to god him self, & þerfore þei ben blasphemers.

Capitulum 17^m.

Prelates refuse obedience and taxes to secular lords.

Also prelatiſ distroien most þe obedience & mekenesse of goddis lawe, for þei seie þat þei owen not to be suget to secular lordis to paien hem taxis in helpe of þe comunes, & owen not to be amendid bi here sugetis of here opyn synnes, but only of þe pope þat is here souereyn; & he

Christ paid tribute to the Emperor.

of no man in herþe for he is greteste of alle. for oure lord ihū crist was suget to þe heþene emperour & paide him tribute for hym & his chirche, & ȝit he hadde no secular lordischipe ne plente of dymes, moche more schulden

*[p. 89 MS.]

*þes riche prestis, þat han secular lordischipe aȝenst goddis lawe & grete Iuelis & plente of worldly goodis, helpe þe kyng & þe lond to meyntene pore men in reste & charite. & siþ crist was most meke & most obediēte to al men,

As vicars of Christ they should give example of meekness;

And þes prelatiſ ben vikeris of crist to ȝeue ensauple of mekenesse, þei owen to be most meke & obediēte to alle here sugetis; for bi goddis lawe eche man oweþ to be suget & obediēte eche to oþere in þe drede of crist. Also in dede þei schewen most rebelte aȝenst god & cristene men, lyuyng in pride, coueitise, idelnesse, extorsions, lecherie, glotyne & wastynge of pore mennus gooddis, & þus þei ben lik to lucifer & ben anticristis, holdynge hem self more worþi þan euere was ihū crist god & man. And it semeþ þat þei techen here sugetis heresie bi here false open lif, for here lif schulde be bokis of ³oþere sugetis vnder hem, & as bokes ben ³false þat techen heresie, so ben þes prelatiſ heretikis þat

But are most rebellious,

and maintain sin by their example.

techen & meyntenen synne bi here cursed ensauple ȝeuyng.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³⁻³ This is added at the bottom of the page in a later hand, and sugetis is written sugeñes.

Capitulum 18^m.

Prelatis also ben worse þan iewis þat naileden crist on þe cros, for þei pursuen crist in his membris for þei seyn þe treuþe aʒenst here cursed lif, & slaundren hem wiþ lesingis, & cursen hem & prisonen hem & slen hem, algatis in wille. And, as crist seiþ, it is all on to dispise & pursue on þat seiþ þe treuþe of crist & to pursue crist god & man. And þis newe pursuyng of *prelatis* is don bi more sutil ypocrisie & after more benefice resceyued of cristis passion, & whanne it were most nede to haue helpe in goddis cause aʒenst *anticristis* clerkis¹ þat destroyen þe treuþe of cristis lif & his apostlis in word & dede; & ʒit *prelatis* resceyuen & axen gredely þat ilke money for whiche iust blood is spilt, þat þe iewis wolden not do; & ouer þis *prelatis* sillen cristene soulis to sathanas for money, & so in manere defoulen cristis blood & setten it at nouȝt; & bisien hem nyȝt & day hou þei may bi *anticristis* iurdiccion & feyned censures stoppe prestis, þat þei prechen not þe gospel to delyuere soulis out of þe deuelis bondis.

Prelates persecute Christ in his members,

and take greedily the money for which just blood is spilt.

Capitulum 19^m.

Prelatis also maken hem self most vnable to kepe þe gospel of crist bi here grete bysynesse abouten roten goodis, & bi pompe & bost of þis world, for þei ben most bisi of alle men in þe world to geten worldly goodis bi purchase, & to holden hem bi false plee, & disdayne to see a pore mannus riȝt & worche after good conscience, but ʒif ony man kaste to helpe pore men in here riȝt aʒenst grete *prelatis* he schal haue here enemyte, & be slaundrid to þe kyng & grete lordis, & pursued bi false cautelis til he be vndon, ʒif þei may bi ony lesyng. so þat whanne þei schulden ben most wilful pore & preche þe gospel * of cristis pouert & his apostlis, þei may not for schame, for slaundryng of hem self, and lest þei maken here owen ypocrisie knowen to þe peple; & herefore þei

Prelates disable themselves from keeping Christ's law by their avarice.

Litigiousness.

Hunt down any one who supports poor men's rights against them.

*[p. 90 MS.]

Are ashamed to preach the truth lest it reflect on them.

¹ omitted X.

hiden *cristis* pouert fro þe peple, & lien vpon hym cursedly to coloure here worldly lif; for here þouȝt, speche, cost & traueile is more aboute worldly goodis þan goddis lawe in studynge & techynge & holy lif of hem self & þe peple.

Pomp and splendour.

And in worldly aray & wast meyne & grete corseris & cloþis of gold & worldly armure þei passen erlis, & atteynen to

Slay men with their own hands.

kyngis aray in bataile to slee *cristene* men wiþ here owen cruel & cursed hondis; but hou may þei preche þe gospel of pacience, meknesse, pees and charite in þis cursed vengauce

They are Satan's knights.

takyng? *certis* þei ben sathanas knyȝttys, turned in-to angelis of liȝt bi name of prestod and religion, to disceyue *cristene* peple in feiþ, hope & charite. but woo to suche *anticristis* prelatis, þus blasphemynge crist & slaundrynge *cristene* men.

Capitulum 20^m.

Prelates teach men to maintain them in their wickedness.

Also *prelatis* techen & hiren lordis & comunes & clerkis to blaspheme god & dispise his lawe & ordynaunce; for þei techen lordis & alle oþere men to meyntene hem in worldly lordschipis, pompe & pride, coueitise, extorsions, pilynge & robbynge of þe peple vnder colour of holy correccion. & notwiþstondynge þat goddis lawe & ensaunple of *cristis* pore life dampnen² seculer lordschipis in clerkis & coueitise & worldly lif, ȝit þei graunten pardon wiþ-uten mesure & ȝouen grete benefices & huge tresour of gold & worldly fauour & sathanas blissyng to lordis, clerkis & comineris, for to meyntene *anticristis* worldly clerkis in þes synnes aȝenst god & his halwen, & for to pursue & slaundre & enprisone

And to persecute poor priests.

& slee & brenne pore prestis þat techen holy writt & *cristis* gospel of pouert & mekenesse aȝenst here worldly lif. & to þis ende þes wickid ydolatrours, worschiperis of false goddis,

False pardons.

graunten to þes manquelleris out of bileue & charite pardons, part of massis & oþere preieris, ȝe to flee to heuene bi-fore þe bodi be cold, & þus blynde *anticristis* prelatis leden blynde lordis, clerkis & comunes to helle for coueitise & brekyng of goddis comaundementis.

¹ dampnem X.

Capitulum 21^m.

Prelatis also setten more pris bi here owen tradicions, maade for to meyntene here pride & worldly wynnynge, þan bi þe gospel of ihū crist; for þei studien faste & techen here owene constitucions, & ponyschen men¹ sore ȝif þei don ouȝt aȝenst hem or kunnen hem not, but þei studien litel or nouȝt cristis gospel & lesse techen it, & recken lest þouȝ men kunnen not þe gospel ne kepen it not; but faste þei techen þe nede & þe auauntage & trewþe of here owen lawis, & seyn þat *holy writt is hard, not so nedful as here owen lawes, but it is false to þe lettere, & men wityþ neuere what it meneþ. & þus þei seyn in dede þat newe lawes, maade in tyme þat sathanas is vnbounden of worldly prelatis ful of coueitise symonye & heresie, ben betere & trewere þan lawe of þe gospel, maad & tauȝt of ihū crist god & man; & on þis ypocrite manere þei seyn preuely þat fonnyd worldly heretikes ben wiser & trewere þan þe holy gost, þan crist & his apostlis; ȝee þat þes worldly clerkis ben wise & trewe & in grete charite, & god þe trinyte & ihū crist & his apostlis ben foolis, false & out of charite;² siþ þes worldly moldwarpis ful of symonye & heresie maken so open lawis so profitable & so trewe, & god wiþ his helperis makeþ derke lawis vnprofitable and vntrewe.

Prelates lay more stress on their own constitutions than on Christ's gospel.

*[p. 91 MS.]
They say holy writ is hard and not literally true.

Thus they make foolish heretics wiser than the Holy Ghost.

Capitulum 22^m.

Also prelatis techen þat þer nys no þing leful in holy chirche in erþe wiþ-uten leue & confermynge of anticrist, & maken all þe chirche suget to hym; for þei seyn openly þat þer is no þing leffel among cristene men wiþ-uten leue of þe bischop of rome, þouȝ he be anticrist ful of symonye & heresie; for comunly of alle prestis he is most contrarie to crist boþe in lif & techynge, & he meynteneþ most synne bi preuylegies, exempcions & longe plees, & he is most

Prelates teach that nothing is lawful without leave of the pope,

who may be antichrist, for he is usually of all prelates the most contrary to Christ in life and teaching.

¹ more X.

² & X. AA.

proud aȝenst cristis mekenesse, most coueitous of worldly goodis & lordschipis aȝenst þe pouert of crist & his apostlis, & most idel in gostly werkis & occupied in worldly causes aȝenst crist besy traueyle & his apostlis in prechyng of þe gospel, & most principale sillere of benefices & veyn indulgencis & sacramentis where crist comaundith men to ȝeue frely alle gostli¹ þingis as þei han frely resceyued hem of god. & ȝit þes worldly prelatis feynen þat it is not lefful

They say that a priest may not teach the gospel without leave of him or his.

to a prest to teche cristis gospel frely wiþ-uten licence of hym or his prelatis vnder hym, þouȝ god comaundeþ prestis, bi open techyng & his lawe and opyn ensauple of cristis lif, to teche þis; & so þei menen þat ȝif þis proude

That is, a priest may not fulfil God's commands without the leave of Christ's enemy.

prest & contrarie to crist & his lawe sende not a cristene man² bi witnesse of his bullis or letteris of his lowere prelatis he may not fulfil þe hestis of god ne werkis of mercy; & so ȝif þis principal enemy of crist & his coueitous clerkis wolen lette a cristene man to kepe goddis hestis & poyntis of charite, he mot leue goddis comaundement vndon & obiche to hem at here wille, & þus þei menen þis ende þat cristene men may not come to heuene bi kepyng & holdyng of trewe feiþ & charite but ȝif anticrist & his worldly clerkis, ful of coueitise, symonye & heresie, ben meyntened in here olde pride & cursednesse aȝenst treuþe of god almyȝtty; for ellis, as þei feynen, þer may be no

*[p. 92 MS.]

bischop no prest *ne cristendom ne sacramentis; but certis þis is foule heresie & blasphemye, for herby cristene men

Thus men would be subject to antichrist more than to Christ.

ben suget to anticrist & his symonye & feyned censuris & to sathanas more þan to ihū crist & his lawe.

Capitulum 23^m.

Prelates stir up wars

Prelatis also ben enemys of pees, conseilouris & meyn-tenouris of werris, & irreguler anemtis god, & here preieris ben cursed; for þei dreden ȝif lordis weren in reste & pees þat þei schulden perceyue þe cursednesse of here symonye,

to call attention from their own wickedness.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

ypocrisie, coueitise, & robberie of here pore tenauntis, & suffre not *prelatis*¹ be worldly lordis & tirauntis, as þei ben now, & *þer*-fore þei casten to occupie lordis in werris, and conseilen *þer*-to vnder colour of wisdom & charite þat þei may regne in here lustis & coueitise as hem lykeþ. for ȝif þei weren trewe *procuratouris* of pees, þei schulden gladly & ioiefully coste alle here worldly lordschipis & here flesch & blood & bodily lif to make pees & charite amongis cristene men, & techen lordis and comunes in open sermons and confessions & priue conseillynge þe *peryl* of werris, & namely of wrongful werris, & hou harde it is to fȝtten in charite, & tellen openly & priuely þe goodnesse & profit of pees & reste, & hou men schulden not haue verray pees but bi holy lif & meyntenynge of treuþe & riȝtwisnesse & distroiynge of wrong & synnes. but now þes worldly *prelates* ben cheef conseilours to werris for pride & coueitise, & ben present in here owene persones in costly array as kyngis, & meyntene many men of armes to slee cristene men in body, & þei hem self killen many þousand in soule & bodi be cursed ensauple of euyl lif & meyntenynge in synne for money, & bi cursed conseil priue & apert; & *þer*-fore þei ben cursed of god & irreguler, & whanne þei preien to god &² holden vp here hondis ful of cristene blood, god seiþ bi þe prophete ysaie þat he wole not here hem ne resceyue here sacrifices, & bi þe prophete malachie god curseþ to here blissyngis, & in many places of holy writt. for þei don not here sacrifices bi mekenesse of herte & mornynge & compuncion for here synnes & þe peplis, but wiþ knackyng of newe song, as orgen or deschant & motetis of holouris, & wiþ worldly pride of costly vestymentis & opere ornamentis bouȝt wiþ pore mennus goodis, & suffren hem *perische* for meschef & laten pore men haue nakid sidis & dede wallis haue grete plente of wast gold.

They ought to preach peace,

but are chief counsellors to war, and fight in person.

They are cursed of God.

Isaiah i. 15.

Malachi ii. 2.

They do their services not meekly but with fanciful singing and rich ornaments.

So the poor have naked sides, and dead walls have much gold.

¹ prestis X.

² omitted X.

Capitulum 24^m.

Prelates discredit Christ's order and life by their worldly life.

Their plate, rich food, and wine, fat horses, furs, and splendid retinue.
*[p. 93 MS.]

Grossetête.

They teach wicked life.

Also *prelatis* distroien þe ordre & lif of crist & his apostlis bi here worldly lif & array & bost & pride, & bryngen þe peple in-to heresie of cristis pore lif; for þei leuen not as pore prestis aftir crist & his apostlis, but as lordis, ȝee kyngis or emperours, in shynynge vessel & delicat metis & wynes, *in fatte hors & precious pellure & ryche cloþis & proude & leccherous squyeris & meyne, & þes vanytes wasten pore mennus goodis & suffren hem goo dailes whanne þei han nedis to pursue. & wiþ alle þis þei seyn þat þei lyuen in þe staat of cristis apostlis & ben here vikeris & successouris, & maken þe comune peple bileue þat crist & his apostlis lyueden þus; & siþ þe lif of *prelatis* is book & in ensaumples to opere sugetis, as lyncolne seiþ, þes *prelates* ben heretikes & maistris of heresie, þat þei techen to þe comunes bi here owen wickid lif þat is a bok to here sugetis, & þus for cristis pore lif & meke & traueilous is tauȝt a lordly lif, proud & veyn occupacion of worldlynnesse & vanyte of þis world.

Capitulum 25^m.

Prelates send away money of the realm to aliens and enemies,

as first-fruits, and to buy prement.

This is simony.

Sometimes the Court of Rome is our enemy.

Prelatis ouere þis robben oure lond of mochil tresour, & senden it to aliens & enemys of oure rewme & bryngen aȝen goddis curs & heresie; for þei don not here spiritual offis aftir goddis lawe, & ȝit gredely gedren dymes & offryngis & *procurasies*, & senden moche gold coine¹ for þe firste fruytis, & to purchase & apropere to hem moo benefices, preuylegies & indulgences; & þis is þefte & symonye ȝif goddis lawe & *mannus* & reson be souȝt, & þe sillere of benefices & spiritual þingis & þe ȝeuere of gold for hem ben cursed of god & man & ben foule heretikis. & sumtyme þe court of rome his worldly aduersarie to oure lond, & namely in fauour of oure enemys; but more harme is of gostly ennemyte, whanne þei enuenumen oure peple wiþ cursed symonye and meyn-tenynge & consent of synne bi blynde obedience. for ȝif

¹ senden moche gold to Rome AA.

ony worldly prelat wole do ony wrong aȝenst riȝt & reson, he schal geten a priueilege or exempcion or sentence of curs for his gold sent & spendid at rome, & moche gold goȝ out of oure lond bi longe pledynge at rome, & riȝt born a doun, & synne contyned¹ & meyntened, þat vnneþis dar ony man speke þeraȝenst; and þus is oure lond robbid of gold, & curs & heresie brouȝt in, and synne longe meyntened, & riȝtwisnesse stoppid.

Prelates buy priuileges to help them to do wrong.
Money sent to Rome for law-suits.

Capitulum 26^m.

Also prelatis seyn þat holy writt is not sufficient to reule holy chirche, & techeris þer-of ben not profitable to þe peple, but here owen statutis maade of synful foolis ben most nedful & techeris þer-of, And meynthenours of chydyng & strif ben most nedful & profitable to þe peple. for ȝif holy writt were ynow for gouernynge of þe chirche, it were veyn & vnresonable to occupie men wiȝ moo lawis, siȝ men ben now of feblere complexion & lasse wytti & of schortere lif þan men weren in olde tyme. & it is luciferis pride * & more to seie þat techeris of mannys tradicions maade of synful foolis ben more profitable & nedeful to cristene peple þan techeris of þe gospel & goddis comaundementis; but þer is o cursed cause of alle þis seiynge; þei loue more here owen worldly wyngynge & pride & lustis þan wyngynge of soulis to blisse by mekenesse & holy lif. And here owen lawes and techeris þer-of meynthenen & procuren þis coueitise & lustis, & holy writt & trewe prechours þer-of dampnen al þis, & techen wilful pouert & mekenesse & gret traueile & penaunce of clerkis; & þer-fore þei comenden here owen lawes & here techeris, & putten goddis lawe & trewe prechouris þer-of bihynde. & heere þei putten on crist boȝe defaute of witt & charite; for siȝ crist maade not the beste lawe for holy chirche, as þei feynen, & telde not whanne & of whom it schulde be maad, him lackid witt & charite, but certis þis his foule heresie putt on crist priuely for to meyntene here owen coueitise & pride.

Prelates say that Holy Writ is not enough, and that their statutes are more profitable.

Men weaker than of old time.
*[p. 94 MS.]

They say this for love of gain.

They accuse Christ of a want of knowledge or charity.

¹ conteyned X.

Capitulum 27^m.

Prelates compel
men to assent to
their errors

by evil teachers
and by threats.

They deceive
lords to make
them imprison
true men.

Prelatis constreynen men of symple vnderstandyng to renne in-to errouris & to blaspheme god; for þei constreynen suche symple men to assente to here dampnacion of treuþes of goddis lawe, bi multitude of worldly clerkis blynde þorou; coueitise & pride, & bi manas & drede of prisonyng and brennyng, & suffren not men to resten in holy writt & in þingis þat þei may understonde, but constreyne hem to assente to nowelries of newe doctours, þat leuen holy writt & reson & feynen dremes & myraclis to plese coueitous clerkis & to greet veyn glorie for here witt, & þus þei bileuen blyndly in many poyntis aʒenst goddis doom. And ʒit þes prelatis desceyuen lordis & maken hem pursue & prisone trewe men þat wolen not assente to errouris ouer holy writt and reson. And þus þes prelatis ben anticristis turmentours of sathanas for to pursue & sle trewe prestis in goddis lawe, & maken lordis turmentours of þe fend to ponysche cristene men, for þei holden þe boundes of holy writt & meynntenen þe trewþe of cristis lif aʒenst worldly prelatis ful of coueitise & heresie.

Capitulum 28^m.

Prelates stop
men from study-
ing holy writ,
and make them
study traditions.

*[p. 95 MS.]

Men have so
much to do with
learning these
new laws, that
they have no
time to study
God's law.

Also prelatis closen or stoppen þe weie to þe blisse of heuene & open þe brode weie to helle; for þei stoppen & letten men fro kunnyng & kepyng & techyng of holy writt, þat is entre & riʒt weie to þe blisse of heuene, & neden men to bisien hem aboute studyng & kepyng & techyng of synful mennys tradicions ful of errour, þat ben maad for pride & coueitise, & also to lerne pride & coueitise & worldly lif & to haunte & *meyntene suche wrecchid worldly lif of clerkys, & þis is þe brode weie to helle. Sumtyme men hadden traueile & werke at þe ful to studie & kepe & teche goddis lawe bi-fore þat þes newe lawes of worldly clerkis weren brouʒt vp, & nowe men ben occupied aboute

lernynge & techyng of hem in alle here lif, þat vnneþe may þei loke & sauoure holy writt in here laste dayes; & he þat can not þes worldly statutis maad for singuler wille and coueitise is hoolden but a fool and vnable to teche & reule cristene peple, þouȝ he kunne and kepe & teche neuere so wel cristis gospel & goddis comaundementis. & to þis ende þes worldly moldwerpis taken keies of helle in stede of keies of þe kyngdom of heuenes, for þei taken ypocrisie & worldly tirauntrie & bostful worldly lif, & meynthyng of synne bi fals pardon & fals absolucion & cursed preieris, & leuen kunnyng & techyng of holy writt & edefyng of cristene soules to heuene by good ensauple of here holy lif.

These moles take the keys of hell instead of the keys of heaven.

Capitulum 29^m.

Prelatis also maken lordis *turmentouris* of sathanas to prisone cristene men for þei holden goddis lawe; for þei maken lordis to enprisone men whanne þei dwellen fourti daies in sentence of curs, & here owene lawe techiþ opynly þat men schullen dwelle in curs bi al here lif vp peyne of dampnacion, has whanne a man haþ weddid a womman sibbe to him in degree of *consanguinyte* or kyn wiche¹ degree is forboden in holy writt, & haþ not witnesse ynowe to proue þis in *mannus* dom, þouȝ he knowe it neuere so certeynly, he schal be cursed in constorie & may not ryse out of þis curs, for þanne he schulde do wyttyngly aȝenst goddis hestis & his conscience, & þus þis man schal euere in þis lif be cursed for he wil not wyttyngly do aȝenst goddis comaundementis & his riȝt conscience. ¶ lord, what charite is it to prisone sich a man, & ȝit þes *anticristis* clerkis cursen men al day for money for techyng of goddis lawe & for werkis of mercy & riȝtwisnesse, & for þat þei wolen not assente to errouris aȝenst holy writt expresly & aȝenst reson. ¶ Lord god, hou schullen *anticristis* mynysters of riȝtwisnesse be

Prelates make lords imprison a man when he has been under excommunication forty days.

Case where a man ought to remain under curse by their own law.

They curse men for teaching God's law and for good works.

¹ omitted X.

Lords should make sure that the curse is just, excused at þe day of dom, siþ þei enprisone falsly trewe men bi fals disceit of worldly heretikys; þer-fore þes lordis schulden be certeyn þat þe curs were riȝtful, & þat þe man were endurid in synne & drede not god ne his vengauunce, and imprison till amendment, not for fines. & þan ponyscheþ hym til he wolde drede god and amende his lif, & not til he wolde ȝeue money to anticristis clerkis at here wille.

Capitulum 30^m.

*[p. 96 MS.]
Prelates argue
like apes and
gluttons.

Also *prelatis* disceyuen *cristene* men bi licknesse * of apis & bi argumentis of glotones til þe peple breke goddis hestis & meytene hem in here cursed lustis. For apis whanne þei seen a man don ony þing bi hem wolen assaie to don þe same dedis til þei ben *perischid* for defaute of crafte or kunnyng; & glotones arguen þus, siþ it is good to me to ete or drynke þus moche, And more mete & drynk is *betere*, þan it is *betere* to me to ete & drynk þus moche more; & bi þis colour þei cessen not til þei heten & drynkyne her legges & hondis out of myȝt & here heuyd out of witt & ben as dede hogges. þus faren þe worldly *prelatis*. þei seyn, siþ þe peple schulden worschipe gregorii, petir & poule, & oþere trewe apostlis of crist, & þei comen in þe staat of apostlis, þanne þe peple schulden worschipe hem þus moche. but þei taken no rewarde hou þes apostlis comen to þis staat, bi ordeynynge & chesyng of god & for holy lif & trewe *seruyce* þat þei diden to *cristene* peple, in trewe techynge of þe holy gospel boþe in word & dede; & hou þei comen to here staat by symonye, bi chesyng of worldly clerkis, & in cas quyke deuelis in flech & blood, & don¹ not here office but lyuen in pride, coueitise, robberie of þe peple, & in fleschly lustis þat cristis apostelis deden not. Also þei arguen þus, siþ petir & poul & oþere apostlis of crist hadden keies of heuene & power to bynde & vnbynde synnes, whiche doynge was confermed in heuene, & we ben in þe staat &

Like apes they say, Since the people worship Peter and other apostles,

why should not they be worshipped, who are in the place of apostles.

They do not consider how the apostles came to this state,

and how differently they come to it.

They argue, too, The apostles had keys of heaven :

¹ omitted X.

successouris of hem, þan we han þe same power; but þei we are their successors and have the same power.
 loken litel þat mannus eleccion makip hem not in sich staat,
 but chesyng of god & kunnyng of holy writt, & souereyn
 traueile & holy lif, & techyng & meynthyng of þe gospel,
 & brennyng charite to deþe for goddis loue, & sauynge of
 cristene soulis; & comunly þei ben fer fro alle þes goodnesse
 & wlappid in pride & coueitise & moo synnes. Also þes Like gluttons
 worldly moldwarpis arguen þus as glotons; siþ it is good they argue thus:
 to prestis to haue worldly goodis for here necessarie liflode & It is good for
 helyng, as poul techip & reson, & þanne þe more þe betre; priests to have
 til þei ben smyten in coueitise & occupacion of þis world, enough for liveli-
 þat þei sauouren nouȝt of gostly þingis, but riot & pride & hood, then the
 rotten muk of þis world. & ȝif it be good to haue holy writt more the better.
 & presthod and knyȝthod and laboreris to serue god & reule
 þe peple; þan it is betre to make moo newe lawis & moo
 ordris in þe chirche, til þe lawe of god be forȝeten & newe
 tradicions in excercise & newe ordris magnyfyed more þanne
 þe¹ clene ordre þat crist made himself; & bi þes iapis þei
 disceyuen þe peple, & gedren to hem*self þe goodis of þis *[p. 97 MS.]
 world & magnyfyen himself, here ordris, & here lawes more
 þan crist & his lawis, & maken þe peple to holden vp þis
 ypocrisie & heresie.

Capitulum 31^m.

Prelates also spoilen lordis of here rentis bi dowynge of Prelates roblords
 þe chirche, & lowe curatis bi appropriyng of parische chirchis by endowments,
 & bi pencions & cost of here officeris, & þei robben þe pore curates by appro-
 peple bi veyn priueylegies & feyned halwyng of chirches, priations and
 auteris and chirchezardis, & opere sacramentis seld for money fees,
 and by annuel rentis for lecherie & opere synnes; & here- the poor by fees
 fore þei may be wel licned to swolwis of þe see & helle, and sin-rents;
 þat resceyuen al þat þei may & ȝelden not aȝen; & þus þei are like whirl-
 þat schulden most forsake þe worlde & worldly coueitise & pools, which take
 vanyte ben most sette in þe world & leste coueiten heuene all and return
 nothing.

¹ omitted X.

& gostly goodis; & þei þat schulden most lede þe peple to heuene, bi trewe techynge of holy writt & ensauple of wilful pouert & mekenesse & bisy traueile in praieris & deuocions & penaunce, leden þe peple to helle bi here worldly lawis, coueitise, pride & queyntise of þe world, & ydelnesse & glotonye & fleschly lustis; & hou þei robben þes parties it is open ynow, þerfore we moten telle of more ypocrisie lesse known.

Capitulum 32^m.

Prelates care more for their parks being broken than God's laws.

Also prelatiſ chargen more here park & br[e]kyngge þer-of þan goddis hestis & brekyngge of hem. ¶ For þei pursuen more & cruelliere for brekyngge of herø parkis þan for brekyngge of goddis comaundementis to saue here soulis bi spiritual medecyne; & þei ben more bisy to loke þat here park be wel kepte þanne to loke þat goddis hestis¹ ben kepte of goddis peple; & þei receruen assoilyngge for brekyngge of here park to hem self, but þei ȝeuen assoylyngge for brekyngge of goddis hestis to eche parische prest or curat. For þei holden here park more derworþi to hem þan þe comaundementis of god, & seken more bisily here owen worldly worschipe and² couetise þan honour of god & sauynge of cristene soulis; & here is ydolatrie & heresie open ynow, & blasphemye of god among worldly & heþen men.

Capitulum 33^m.

Prelates by evil life in the highest state of the church hinder good life in Christendom.

Prelatis also entren vnder colour & studie of cristis apostlis & lyuen & teche contrariouſly to hem & don most harm to cristendom, ȝee more þan ony soudon or sarsyn or oþer men of wrong bileue. ¶ For siþ þis stat is most wortþi in þe chirche, & þei lyuen so worldly & synfully þer-inne & turnen it vpsodon, þei distroien most þe goode lif of cristendom & techen most perilous heresye. And herefore þei

¹ omitted X.

² þan X

bicomen þe deuēlis iogelours to blynde mennus gostly eiȝen; Become devil's jugglers.
 þei maken men wene þat here worldly lif & cursed ys þe
 holy lif of cristis apostlis, & þus bryngen in errour & heresie
 in þe peple, & ben sathanas *transfigurid* in-to an aungel of
 liȝt, & verrefien þis word of holy writt, þat þei ben made a
 spectacle to angelis & men, but on euyl manere, where þei 1 Cor. iv. 9.
 schulden ben *a spectacle of angelis & men to loken onne *[p. 98 MS.]
 with ioie for here stronge fiȝttinge aȝenst enemys of soule bi
 mekenesse, wilful pouert, & grete traueile in techynge of
 þe gospel, & suffrynge of peynes & deþ. þerfore in en-
 saumple of cristene men to sue hem in þes poyntis þei ben
 a spectacle to angelis & men to wonder on here cursed pride,
 coueitise & ydelnesse in gostly traueile, & cowardise in cristis
 bataile, & letten charite of cristene men bi here euyl en-
 saumple, & þus in stede of cristis apostlis ben comen in Instead of
Christ's apostles
we have masked
devils,
 viserid deuēlis, to disceyuen men in good lif & bryngen hem to
 sathanas here maister, & in ¹ þis manere þei pleien þe pagyn who play tricks
like the Scots
when they took
the scutcheon of
St. George to sur-
prise the English.
 of scottis; for as scottis token þe ² skochen of armes of seynt
 george & here-bi traieden englischemen, so þes anticristis
 prelatis taken name & staat of cristis apostlis, as ȝif þei
 wolden helpe & lede cristene men þe riȝtte weie to heuene
 as þei diden, but here-bi þei betraien cristene men in-to
 synne by suyng of here techynge & cursed lif, & leden hem
 faste þe weie to helle.

Capitulum 34^m.

Also prelatis constreynen prestis to lese charite & blaspheme Prelates compel
priests to fight
in person,
 crist & disceyue his peple; for þei neden prestis to fiȝtte &
 werre in here owen persone aȝenst cristene men, & here
 abouten spende pore mennys liflode for to hauen a veyn
 name of hardynesse & þank of lordis þat kunnen neiþer witt
 ne reson; for þei senden opyn comissions to alle curatis by commissions
ordering them to
be ready armed.
 vndir here deuēlis iurdiccions bi vertue of mahoundis
 obedience & bi manas of þe kyngis power to make hem

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.

redi wiþ armure to werre iolily aʒenst cristene men. ¶ And here-by is armure of pacience and charite and holi preiere & trist in god putt away, & þe deuellis lawe of cruelte, enemyte & veyn trist in mannys myȝt brouȝt in. But goddis curs renneþ many þousand tyme wiþ al þis. & here-bi ben half dede men confortid to fiȝtte & slee cristene men & rennen to helle hedly; & so þes worldly prelatis ben chef capteyns & arraouris of sathanas batailis to exile good lif & charite, but certis no tonge in þis lif may telle hou many soulis gon to helle bi þes cursed capteyns & anticristis iurdiccion & censures.

God's curse goes with this.

Worldly prelates are chief captains of Satan's army.

Capitulum 35^m.

Prelatis also ben weiward ypocritis, blynde lederis, swolwyng þe grete cameile al hool & siynge or clensynge a litel gnatte; for þei resceyuen & purchasen bi gret ypocrisie seculer lordischipis, aʒenst goddis lawe olde & newe & ensaunple of cristis lif & his apostlis, as lefful, profytable & nedeful; & forsaken as venym matrimonye, þat is leffel bi holy writt, til newe vowis of contynense of worldli clerkis weren brouȝt in bi disceit of þe fend. For many prestis now kepen neiþer matrimonye ne charite, but defoulen wyues, maidenens, widewis & nunnes in eche manere of lecherie, & children ben morþerid, & synne aʒenst kynde is not *clene fled. For sathanas caste to purchase worldly honour & plente of worldly goodis & welfare & ydelnesse to ȝonge prestis, & dalliaunce wiþ wommen & priue rownyng; & is redy nyȝt & day to stere boþe partis to leccherie, & sumtyme to hyden here synne bi fals opis & morþeryng of children, & sumtyme haunten it opynly & schamen not þer-of; & her-bi heiȝe prelatis wynnyn many þousand pondis in fewe ȝeris & holden grete housholde as lordis, & þus by þis ypocrisie in boþe poyntis ben lordis & prestis & comunes encombrid, & goddis lawe dispisid & broken, & synnes gedrid in grete hordis.

Prelates condemn matrimony, which Christ allows.

Many priests live foul life.

*[p. 99 MS.]

Sometimes sin is hid by perjury and child-murder.

Sometimes practised openly and without shame.

Prelates make money by it.

Capitulum 36^m.

Also *prelatis* bi sotil ypocrisie horden & meyntenen here synne & opere mennys; for þei seyn þat in here absence men may not speke aȝenst here open cursed synnes for synne of bacbitynge & schlaundrynge; & þei ben so malicious & myȝtti in worldly power þat þei wolen suffre no man to speke aȝenst her synnes in here presence; & so þei wolden bi ypocrisie haue þis ende, þat no man schulde speke opynli & sadly aȝenst here cursednesse in no manere, but suffre hem wexe roten in here lustis & robbe þe peple & disceyue cristendom wiþ-uten ony letting; but certis þes anticristis clerkis lien falsly aȝenst cristis lore & profite of cristene men. For crist & his apostlis reproueden pharisees & heroude & heretikis in here absence & to þe peple, as gospillis & pistles witnessen, to oure ensauple to do so with charite & discrecion, & þei ben sclaunderid bi-fore god & his angelis & goode men in erþe bi here opyn cursed lif; & þo men þat reprouen bi charite & discrecion here opyn synnes helpen to amenden here synnes & don awei here sclaunder; but of sclaunder anemptis god & his angelis reckon þei not, but alle here care is last here ypocrisie bi knowen to lordis & myȝtty men, for drede of takyng away of here temporal lordischipis þat ben cause of here synful lyf. & þus þei ben cursed of god; for þat þing þat is verrey sclaunder þei clepen & rekenen as no sclaunder, & þat þing þat is no sclaunder but remedie þer aȝenst þei crien & clepen sclaunder; but alle þis is for þei wolden dwelle stille in robberyng of þe peple & here cursed lustis & sclaunder, & disceyue cristen men in good techyng and ensauple of holy lif.

Prelates shelter their sins and other men's.

They say it is slander to speak against them in their absence, and suffer no man to rebuke them in their presence.

Christ rebuked pharisees in their absence.

They care nothing about offence to God, but hide their hypocrisy from lords for fear of losing endowments.

Capitulum 37^m.

Prelatis also blasphememen god & techen opere men to don þe same; for þei lyuem hem self in pride & coueitise & louen & norischen & meyntenen suche vicious folis, & haten

Prelates live in pomp and maintain vicious men,

and oppress
virtuous men.

*[p. 100 MS.]

They ought to
put down wicked-
ness in their
retinue.

& dispisen mekenesse & wilful pouert, & so þei don *vertuose* men & oppressen hem; & þus þei conspiren aʒenst crist¹ & his *vertuous* lif & his meke *seruauntis*, & ben sathanas *procuratouris* to meyntene synful men in his *seruyce*. For *certis* þei ben cursed of god ʒif þei meyntenen wityngly & wilfully *proude lordis & leccherours of here owne meynne in here housholde; for ʒif þei loueden god & þe soulis of here *seruauntis* þei schulden amende þis cursed lif or ellis putten hem out of here companye; but now for pride of hem self & wynnyng of drit þei holden forþ suche cursed meyne to sclaunder oþere men. ¶ But as crist and poul witnessen, suche *prelatis* ben cursed, & forsaken *cristis* feiþ, & ben werse þan heþen men þat neuere resceyueden *cristendom*.

Capitulum 38^m.

Prelates deceive
men by their
novelties of
pilgrimages and
pardons.

They say that a
wicked priest
does not make
the sacrament
less effectual.

The prayers of a
wicked priest
are accursed.

By these pardons
men's alms are
misdirected.

Also *prelatis* disceyuen *cristene* men in feiþ, hope & charite bi here nouelerie of massis at rome, at scala celi, & newe pardons & pilgrimages; for þei maken þe peple to bileue or triste þat ʒif a prest seye a masse at scala celi for a soule it schal onoon ben out of *purgatorie*, þouʒ god of his riʒtwisnesse ordeyne þat soule to abide þere fourty ʒere or mo, & þouʒ þe prest be cursed for symonye & pride; for as þei feynen falsly þe masse may not be peirid. *certis* þe sacrament may not be paired for synne of þe prest; but þe preiers of cursed *prestis* in þe masse ben cursed of god & his angelis, & *certis* a prest may be so cursed & in heresie þat he makip not þe sacrament. & god only knowip whanne his synne is in þat degre & whanne in lesse, but euere it is harmful to him þat makeþ þe sacrament vnworþily. & bi þes feyned pardons þe peple leueþ to do here almesse to pore nedy men enprisoned bi god himself & doþ it to ryche men & wasteris, & hopip to haue more þank of god þer-by þan to do it aftyr *cristis* owne techynge; & þes *prelatis* chargen more folye

¹ omitted X.

avowis of sicke pilgrimagis & brekyng of hem, þan þe strong comaundementis of god & brekyng of hem, & þus þe peple dredith¹ more to breke þis folie avowis maad of here owen errour þan to breke goddis comaundementis, & louen more here folye avowis to fulfille hem þan to fulfille goddis hestis; & þus þei ben disceyued bi þes nouelries in feith, hope & charite bi þes anticristis prelatis.

More stress laid on vows than on God's commandments.

Capitulum 39^m.

Prelatis also ben malicious foxis & rauyschyng wolues, oppressyng pore curatis & annuel prestis in here iurdiccion; for whanne þe kyng & lordis axeden of grete prelatis subsidies & dymes for here temperaltes þei graunten hem so þat pore curatis & annuelleris may be taxid at here setting; & so alle þe charge fallith on here pore curatis, & opere & þe riche prelatis gon free or hellis wynnyn a porcion to hem self of goodis of here pore curatis. & þus whanne þei han robbid lordis bi ypocrisie of here temperal lordischipis sotylly & wrongfully þei rauyschen þe goodis of pore prestis vnder hem; & þus þei don wrong to lordis, wrong to pore curatis, & to pore comunes also; & bi þes seculer lordischipis þat þei han be ypocrisie þei ben *emperours & tirauntis of opere prestis. & ȝit þei owen to be most meke of alle opere, and most bisi in studyng & techyng of holy writt & ensauple of alle goode manere of lif, boþe to cristene men & to heþene; but alle þes gostly goodis ben rauysched & stolen from holy chirche, & contrarie synnes brouȝt in in stede of hem bi þis dowyng of prestis wiþ seculer lordischipis; & þis is werse þan rauyschyng & stelyng of alle worldli goodis & sleynge of many þousand of mannus bodies, as soulis & vertues ben betre þan roten drit.

Prelates oppress poor curates and annual priests in assessing the taxes.

They wrong all classes.

*[p. 101 MS.]

¹ drawith X.

Capitulum 40^m.

Isaiah lvi. 10.

Prelates are dumb dogs, so stuffed with worldly goods that they do not bark.

They undertake to lead the people past dangerous ways and enemies,

but allow Christian souls to be strangled by wolves of hell.

They persecute those who would preach.

They have a compact with Satan to give him souls if he gives them wealth.

Also *prelatis* ben *doumbe* houndis þat may not berke in tyme of most nede but ben traitours to god & his peple; for þei ben so chokid wiþ talow of worldly goodis and ocupacion abouten hem, þat þei may not preche þe gospel & warne þe peple of þe deuelis disceitis; & siþ þei taken þe charge & offis to lede þe peple bi so *perilous* weies & enemyes bi trewe *prechyng*e of þe gospel & ensaumples of here owne holy lif, & suffren *cristene* soulis be stranglid wiþ woluyes of helle þorou; here *doumbnesse* & occupiynge aboute þe world, þei ben cursed traitours to god & his peple; & ȝit to fulfille þe fendis cruelte þei pursuen & cursen ȝif ony pore prest wole preche freli *cristis* gospel & delyuere *cristene* soulis oute of þe fendis hondis & leden hem þe riȝtte weie to heuene. alle *cristene* men schulden crie out on þis false treson & fendis malice &, as *crist* seiþ in þe gospel, casten hem out of *cristene* *mennus* companye for here olde heresies & cursed disceit of *cristene* soulis; for þei han maad a preue couenaunt wiþ sathanas here maister, þat he schal haue soulis of here feyned iurdiccion so þat þei haue here worldly pride & coueitise & ydelnesse & fleshly lustis at here wille: but woo to suche traitours of *cristene* peple.

Capitulum 41^m.

Worldly prelates crucify Christ spiritually,

when they give cure of souls to worldly fools.

Crisostom.

Austyn.

Bernard.

ȝit worldly *prelatis* gostly don *crist* on þe cros & sleen his *prophetis* & his *apostlis*; for þei don *cristis* holy lif & techynge, & so in a manere *crist* hym self, on þe cros of lesyngis & bitraien him to heþene men whanne þei ȝeuen cure of soulis to worldly foolis, werse þan ben heþene houndis. And so þei don *crist* on þe cros of vnkyndenesse & dispit, And hereby dispisen hym more þan diden iewis nailynge *crist* on bodili cros. and seynt ion *crisostom*, or wiþ þe gildene mouþ, & seynt austyn witnessen plenerly þis sentence; & bernard seiþ þat a man þat synneþ opynly

aʒenst goddis hestis & ʒeueþ cursed ensaumples to oþere men
 dispisiþ¹ more god & doþ more wrong to hym þan iewis And do more
 whanne þei naileden him bodely on þe cros. For crist louede wrong to him
 more cristene men² soulis þan his owen bodily lif; & þis than did the
 cursed man drawiþ fro crist alle soulis als moche as in him Jews.
 is, & þe iewis drowyn fro him his bodily lif þat he louede
 lasse; & þei slen his prophetis & apostlis,* whanne þei do *[p. 102 MS.]
 cursedly aʒenst here techynge & maken it fals as moche as They slay apos-
 þei kunne: þis sentence witnessiþ ion crisostom vpon þe tles, etc., when
 gospel of seynt matheu; & þus þei sillen crist & bitraien they do against
 hym for money whanne þei forsaken þe treuþe of holy writt their teaching.
 & holy lif for worldly honour & coueitise, & ambrose & bede Crisostom.
 witnessen þis poynt. Ambrose.
 Bede.

Capitulum 42.

Prelatis blasphememen aʒenst þe holy gost; for þei quenchen Prelates quench
 his ʒiftis & suffren not cristene men to teche goddis peple the gifts of the
 wiþ sicke ʒiftis, but maken hem to waste þes precious ʒiftis; spirit by not
 and so as to here entent & to here dampnacion þei quenchen allowing men to
 þe holy gost. For in here wille þei distroien his werkis, use such gifts.
 & þe synne is demed bi þe entent, þouȝ þe ende come not
 forþ but be lettid bi goddis myȝt. For whanne þei ben
 vnable bi ignoraunce & wickid lif to teche cristene peple
 goddis lawe, þei wollen not suffre trewe men teche frely
 cristis gospel wiþ-uten here leue & lettris, þouȝ trewe men
 ben neuere so mochil charged & stired of god to preche his Forbid to teach
 gospel. but þei don þis for þei wolden haue money for here Christ's gospel
 lettris & swerynge þat men not preche aʒenst here synnes, without their
 þouȝ þei ben neuere so opyn cursed traitours of god & his leave,
 peple; as men gessen þat veyn religious don to haue leue which they give
 of þes goddis traitours to sewe fablis, cronyclis, & lesyngis only for money
 for to robbe þe pore peple aftir-ward bi clamouse beggynge, and oaths not to
 dampnyd bi goddis lawe; & þus þei ʒeuen leue to sathanas attack their sin.
 preschours for to preche fablis & flaterynge & lesyngis, & to
 Thus friars get
 leave to preach
 fables.

¹ dispeseþ X.² omitted AA.

Craft of their proceedings.

In fact they command that no true man shall preach the gospel.

disceyue þe peple in feiþ & good lif & robbe hem of here worldly goodis, & to putten blasphemye vpon crist bi here opyn beggyng & letten cristis *prechours* to *preche* frely þe gospel þat wole not flatere but seyn þe soþ to eche man & eche staat aftir goddis lawe. but bi suche ypocrisie þei letten þus *prechyng* of cristis gospel, last lordis & comunes *perceyuen* here falsnesse, þei forbeden not vtterly þat men schulden not *preche* þe gospel, but þat men schulden not *preche* wiþ-outen here leue; & siþ þei ben ful of coueitise, symonye, pride, extorsions & *opere* falsnesse, þei wolen ȝeue to no man leue þat þei supposen wole seie þe soþe & not spare, & so in entente & dede þei comaunden þat no trewe man schal *preche* þe gospel. & bi þis þei casten to ende in here coueitise, symonye & robberie & meyntenynge of *anticristis* chirche, & it is to drede last þei enden in þis blasphemye aȝenst þe holy gost.

Capitulum 43^m.

Prelates blaspheme against the Father in pretending to powers reserved to him.

They pretend to absolve,

while they are only messengers to say that God absolves for contrition.

*[p. 103 MS.]

They lay more weight upon their absolution than God's.

ȝit worldly *prelatis* blasphemem aȝenst god þe fadir of heuene; for þei taken vpon hem power þat is specyaly & onely reserued to god; þat is assoilynge of synnes & ful remission of hem; for þei taken on hem principal assoilynge of synnes & maken þe peple to bileue so; whanne þei haue only assoilynge as *vikeris or massageris to witnesse to þe peple þat god assoiliþ for contricion, & ellis neiþer angele ne man ne god hym self assoiliþ but ȝif þe synnere be contrit; þat is fully haue sorowe for his synnes, & haue wille raþere to suffre los of catel & worldly frendschipe & honour & bodely deþ þan to do wityngly aȝenst goddis comaundement & wille; & þei chargen more here owen assoilynge þan assoillyng of god, for ȝif a man come to here schrifte & sacramentis þei assoilen hym & maken siker þouȝ þe man lie vpon hym self & be not assoilid of god; & þouȝ a man be neuere so treuly assoilid of god for his entre sorwe of synne & charite þat he haþ now to god, þei seyn þat he his

dampnable but ȝif he be assoilid of hem ȝif he haue space
 þer-to, pouȝ þei ben cursed heretikis & enemyes of crist &
 his peple. & þus þei taken litel reward to god whanne he
 seiþ, what euere tyme a synful man haþ so enteire sorowe
 for his synnes he schal be saaf. þes prelatis schulden præche
 þis contricion & mercy of god & ioies of heuene, & þe peril
 of schrifte wiþ-oute repentaunce, & foulnesse of synnes,
 & grete peynes of helle, & riȝtwissnesse of god to make þe
 peple to flee synne & kepe trewly goddis comaundementis,
 & not disceyuen hem bi here owene power of assoilynge,
 ne bi fals pardon ne fals preieris & oþer nouelries bi side
 goddis lawe. of þes þre & fourty errouris & heresies may
 men see hou euele prelatis disceyuen cristendom. For of
 hem & non oþere is þis speche, & hou þei ben cause of
 werris & euele lif in þe peple, and of here dampnacion.
 God for his endles myȝt and mercy amende þes errouris and
 oþere, ȝif it be his wille. Amen.

They should
 preach contricion
 and the danger
 of shrift without
 repentance.

We have seen
 three and forty
 errors of prelates.

May God amend
 them.

V.

SPECULUM DE ANTICHRISTO.

I HAVE little doubt that this tract is by Wyclif; it seems to me to bear the stamp of genuineness in style as in matter. The assertion of free-will on p. 110 may surprise some who know how prominent a place was held by predestination in Wyclif's theological system, but it will be seen that in dealing with the next point of Antichrist and his clerks, predestination is treated as a recognized truth. This double-sided assertion of doctrine is usual with Wyclif, who declares in plain terms *Cum prædestinatione et præscientia stat libertas arbitrii* (see Lechler, I. 509).

The tract seems to be early in date, belonging to a time when the poor priests were already causing scandal, but when no violent measures had been taken to repress them. It must have been written before Wyclif developed his doctrine of the Eucharist, or he could hardly have mentioned the mass as he does on p. 112, without any reference to the falsity of transubstantiation.

I have retained the title, though not found in either MS., for the sake of distinction from No. XVII.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

Antichrist and his clerks object to preaching—

- I. That it causes dissension, and that Christian men should seek peace and charity. To which true men say that Christ has bidden them to preach, and that preaching does more good than harm.
- II. That preaching is against charity, because it hardens enemies. It is better to pray for them.
True men cite Christ's example. Some men are saved through preaching; others made better for a time. Besides in all assemblies there are some good men who profit.
- III. That preaching can do nothing for men who are ordained by God either to perish or be saved.
True men say that God ordains men to be saved through preaching; that men have free will, and God will give them grace if they desire it.
- IV. That prayer is more profitable than preaching.
True men say that preaching is better than praying by mouth. Christ commanded preaching, but not matins or evensong. It is uncharitable for a man to wrap himself in contemplation when he might be teaching others. Yet priests are to pray devoutly.

Speculum de Antichristo.

Hou anticrist & his clerkis feren trewe prestis fro
prechyng of cristis gospel bi foure disceitis.

First þei seyn þat prechyng of þe gospel makip discencion
& enemyte, & siþ cristene men schulde make pees &
charite, as þe gospel seiþ, þei schulden cesse of prechyng,
siþ þer comeþ more harm þan good þer-of. Here trewe men
seyn þat crist cam in-to þis world not to make pees of synful
men to lyuen in here fleschly lustis & worldly ioie at here
lykyng, but to departe¹ hem fro synful lif bi þe gospel, þat
is clepid sward of þe holy gost. & þouȝ luciferis children
ben wode & sleen hem self bi steryng of here fadir for
enemyte & here owen cruel hertis, ȝit cristene men schullen
not cesse to do þe² comaundement & honour of god & poyntis
of charite to here breþren; for crist & his apostlis leften not
prechyng of þe gospel, & ȝit þe deuelis lymes maden dis-
cencion & grucchyng & fiȝttinge aȝenst hem And goode
men resceyuyng cristis gospel, to ȝeue vs ensaumples to laste
trewe in prechyng þouȝ anticristis clerkis grucchen. & þus
cristene men schulde make verrey *pees bitwene god &
cristene soulis bi trewe kepyng of his hestis, & distroie
fals pees of cursed men and don here traueile to amende hem
for ellis þei failleden in charite. For bi þis sotil ypocrisie
anticrist wolde quenche & owtlaue holy writt & make alle
men dampnyd; for he wolde heuere stire summe of his
seruauntis & stryue & debate for prechyng of goddis word,
& þus schulde no man knowe goddis word bi prechyng.
And certis ȝif ony man preche in grace þer comeþ more good
þer-of þan alle fendis lymes may don harm, þouȝ many
þousand sathanas children ben deppere dampnyd for here
rebelte aȝenst god & his gracious techyng.

Antichrist and
his clerks say
that preaching
should be stop-
ped,
first, because it
disturbs peace.

Christ's peace is
not that men
should live at
ease in their lusts.

Lucifer's children
may be mad,

yet Christians
must fulfil God's
orders,

which are to be
true in preaching.
*[p. 104 MS.]

Antichrist would
else soon stop
preaching by
stirring up strife
against it.

If a man preach
in grace it does
good,

though Satan's
children may be
deeper damned.

¹ do parte X.

² omitted AA.

Secondly, Antichrist's clerks say that men should cease from preaching lest they harden their enemies.

Ezekiel iii. 26.

Matthew vii. 6.

We ought to pray for our enemies as Christ did on the cross and St. Stephen,

who suffered wilfully to give us example.

Through preaching more are saved and fewer damned.

Sometimes men are led to amend for a while,

and they do good works by nature which will lessen their pain in hell.

In a gathering of people there are generally some good.

¶ Þe secunde tyme¹ þei seyn þat men schulden cesse of prechyng for charite of here enemyes. For bi prechyng here enemyes be stired to hate & mansleyng of holy prechouris & not amendid. for þere ben many þousand þat schullen ben dampnyd & not leue here synne for ony prechyng, but more dampnid for þei heren goddis word & don not þer-aftir. And for þis charite seiþ god to þe prophete þat he schal make his tounge² cleue faste to þe roof of his mouþ, for þe peple is þus hard aȝenst god & his techyng. And þus comaundeþ crist þat men schullen not ȝeue holy þingis to hondis & putten precious perlis to hoggis, & god biddeþ to his prechour þat he speke not þere goddis word where is noon heryng.

¶ Here trewe men seyn þat þei schulden loue more god & cristene soulis þan here owene temporal lif, And þerfore techiþ goddis lawe to here enemyes & preie for hem hertly til þei weren dede, as crist dide on þe cros & his apostlis to here deþ & namely seynt steuene. And ȝit þei weren certeyn þat here enemyes schulden slen hem, þerfore, to teche vs þat, þei suffreden wilfully to ȝeue vs ensauple to sue hem in þis. & þouȝ men schullen algatis be dampnyd ȝit it helpiþ hem þat goddis word is prechid, for þer-by moo men ben sauȝd & fewere dampnyd & so lesse peyne to hem algatis. And ȝit sumtyme þei han compuncion & leuen here synnes long tyme & ben in grace & charite for a tyme, þat is betre þan alle þis world, ȝe to hem; & god ȝeueþ to eche man a free wille to chese good or euyl & god is redi to ȝeue hem grace ȝif þei wolen resceyuen it; & ȝit þei done here-by many goode dedis of kynde & for hem schullen haue moche reward in þis world at þe laste & lesse peyne in helle, and it³ is gret vengauce of god whanne he wiþ-drawiþ prechyng fro a comynalte. For þei ben not worþi to here goddis word & þerfore þei schullen be deppere dampnyed; and where a gedryng of peple is summe comynly ben goode, & for hem principaly men prechen goddis word & not for houndis þat berken aȝenst god & his lawis, ne for swyn þat baþen hem in

¹ omitted AA.

² omitted AA.

³ ȝit AA.

synne & wolle neuere leuen hem for drede of peyne ne hope ¹ of blisse. And ȝif *prechours* *weren *certeyn* þat alle a comynalte wolden not here goddis word þei wolden not *preche þere* but goo to oþer peple, as *crist* biddiþ, for þei schullen not fayle in o place or oþere of summe good men til þe day of dome come.

*[p. 105 MS.]
If preachers knew there were none who would listen they would go elsewhere.

¶ Þe þridde tyme þei seyn þat goode men schulden be sauȝd þouȝ no *prechyng* be, for þei may not *perische*, as god seiþ. And summe wickid men schullen neuere come to blisse for no *prechyng* in erþe. ¶ Here seyn trewe men þat as god haþ ordeyned goode men to blisse, so god haþ ordeyned hem to come to blisse bi *prechyng* & *kepyng* of goddis word; and ² so as þei schullen nedis come to blisse, so þei moten nedis here & kepe goddis hestis, & herof *serueþ* *prechyng* to hem; and summe wickid men now schullen be conuertid bi goddis grace & herynge of his word. And who knoweþ þe mesure of goddis *mercy*, to whom herynge of goddis word schal þus profite? eche man schal hope to come to heuene & enforce hym to here & fulfille goddis word, for siþ eche man haþ a free wille & chesyng of good & euyl, no man schal be sauȝd but he þat willefully hereþ and endeles kepiþ goddis hestis, and no man schal be dampnyd but he þat wilfully & endeles brekiþ goddis comaundementis, & forsakiþ þus & blasphemeth god. & herynge of goddis word & *grace* to kepen it, frely ȝouyn of god to man but ȝif he wilfully dispise it, is riȝt weie to askape þis peril & come to endeles blisse; & herefore synful ³ men owen wiþ alle manere mekenesse & reuerence & deuocion heren goddis word & grucchen not ne stryue aȝenst *prechyng* of cristis gospel.

Thirdly, Antichrist uses the argument from predestination.

True men say that God ordains good men to bliss; but only through preaching and keeping his word.

Every man is to hope to come to heaven.

A man is saved or damned as he wilfully keeps or breaks God's behests.

¶ Þe firþe tyme þei seyn þat men schulden cesse of *prechyng* & ȝeuen hem ⁴ to holy preiers & *contemplacion* for þat helpeþ more cristene men & is betre. ¶ Trewe men seyn boldly þat trewe *prechyng* is betre þan *preiynge* bi mouþe, ȝe þouȝ it come of herte & clene deuocioun, & it edifieþ more þe peple; & þefore crist comaundid specialy

Fourthly, Antichrist says that men should leave preaching and give themselves to prayer.

Preaching is better than praying; it edifies more.

¹ op X. corrected into 'hope' by a later hand.

³ omitted AA.

² omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

his apostlis & disciplis to preche þe gospel, & not to close hem in cloistris ne chirchis ne stones to preie þus. And þerfore ysaie seied woo is to me for I was stille. And poul seiþ: woo is to me ȝif I preche not þe gospel. & god seiþ¹ to þe prophete, ȝif he schew not to þe synful man² his synnys he schal be dampnyd þer-fore. Jerom seiþ as myche as innocent lif profitiþ bi merit & holynesse, so moche it harmeþ ȝif it aȝenstonde nouȝt³ wicked enemys of goddis lawe. And gregori seiþ, þat men of gret kunnyng & vertuous lif þat chesen stilnesse & desert for loue of contemplacion ben giltif of as many soulis as þei myȝtten saue bi techynge & dwellynge in þe world; & þus prechyng is algatis best. neþeles deuout preiere of men of good lif is good in certeyn tyme, but it is aȝenst charite for prestis to preie euere more and no tyme to preche; siþ crist chargiþ prestis more for to preche þe gospel þan to seie masse or matynes, for he ne spekiþ not of matynes ne euensong opynly, * ne manere of masse now vsed, but only of þe sacrament; but he comaundiþ to prestis for to preche þe gospel bi-fore his deþ and aftir. And þer-fore þe grete clerk lyncolne proueþ þat trewe prechyng of þe gospel passiþ alle oþere goode werkis þat man doþ in erþe; & newe doctours, ȝe of mannys lawe, seyn þat prechyng passeþ þe masse in nyne profites. & þus seiþ poul þat god sent hym for to preche þe gospel & not to cristene men; and ion þe ewangelist seiþ, ȝif a man see his broþer haue nede & close his mercy fro him haþ not charite. moche more ȝif men ben in nede of soule þer is no charite in prestis but ȝif þei techen hem goddis comaundementis ȝif þei han kunnyng &⁴ leiser þer-to; & ihū seiþ þat men schullen be dampnyd ȝif þei failen in bodily werkis of mercy, þat is prechyng, ordeyned to hem. & þus prestis may not cesse of prechyng for suche preiynge, for þan þei leften þe betre þing, & to hem grettere comaundement, & deden þe lesse & lesse worþi, & þus þei weren out of charite; & þanne here preieris schulden not ben acceptable to god, for þei suden

Isaiah vi. 8.

1 Cor ix. 16.

Ezekiel iii. 17.

Jerome:

Gregory.

*[p. 106 MS.]
Christ never
speaks of matins
or evensong,
but he commands
priests to preach.

Grossetete.

1 Cor. i. 17.

1 John iii. 17.

Christ says men
shall be damned
who fail in
works of mercy.

Preaching is
such.

If they neglect it
they are out of
charity, and then
their prayers are
vain.

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ omitted X.⁴ omitted X.

not crist þat cam from heuene to saue soulis bi prechyng of
 þe gospel. lord, what charite is it to a kunnyng man to
 chese his owene contemplacion in reste, & suffre opere men
 goo to helle for bregynge of goddis hestis, whanne he may
 lyztly teche hem & gete more þank of god in litil techynge
 þan bi longe tyme in suche preieris. þerfore prestis schulden
 studie holy writt & kepe it in here owen lif, & teche it opere
 men trewely & frely, & þat is best & most charite. And in
 certeyn tymes preie most¹ deuoutly & haue sorowe for here
 synnes & opere mennys. And þan þei schullen be as þe
 firmament ouer litel sterris in comparison of opere seyntis in
 heuene. God brynge vs alle to þat glorious blisse for his
 endeles mercy. Amen.

What charity is
 it in a wise man
 to wrap himself
 in contemplation
 while other men
 go to hell for
 want of teaching?

Yet priests are
 to pray devoutly.

¹ omitted AA.

VI.

OF CLERKS POSSESSIONERS.

I HESITATE to pronounce an opinion as to the authorship of this tract. In expression it often resembles IV. and VII., but it has points of likeness to others which I cannot assign to the same hand. The mention of the voice heard at the first endowment of the Church (Chap. ix.), and the reference to the parallel between the three estates and the persons of the Trinity (see opening of Chapters xxxi. xxxii. xxxiii.), connect it with No. XXVI.

There are touches of irony (*e.g.* Chap. viii.) which are like Wyclif, and the phrase “Antichrist’s martyrs” (Chap. x.) is applied to the “irreligious that have possessions,” in a tract on the Seven Works of Mercy, which is probably genuine (S. E. W., III. 171).

If the tract be Wyclif’s, we may date it rather before 1380. The friars are already a bad set who “bear the banner” for subtlety and sham poverty, but they are not yet the habitual adversaries whom Wyclif cannot refrain from attacking.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Clerks possessioners destroy priesthood, knighthood, and the commonalty. Priesthood, by giving themselves to worldly business, by appropriation and its consequences, by luxurious life and neglect of preaching. Knighthood, by taking into amortisement lands which should sustain knights to govern the people. The commons by depriving them of the services of priests and knights, by oppression in rents and fines, and by wasteful expenditure.
- II. They say by their deeds that Christ’s example is insufficient.
- III. They disobey God, and teach that lords may not amend them, nor commons withdraw their tithes.
- IV. They set their rules above Christ’s, and punish breaking them more severely than idle swearing.
- V. They shelter themselves under the names of saints, but live wickedly.
- VI. They tell lies about saints to colour their own worldly life.
- VII. They get goods under pretence of spending them in alms and spend them on pomp.
- VIII. They take upon themselves heavier burdens than did Christ, since they add worldly lordship to the duties of the priesthood; and of these conflicting calls they attend most to the unworthy.
- IX. Secular lordships in the church lead to simony, and wealth of the orders brings men to them for ease and luxurious life.
- X. The possessioners are Antichrist’s martyrs, dead to holiness, who will spend money and life to maintain their worldly possessions.

- CHAP. XI. They preach seldom, and then for show, and hinder those who would truly preach the gospel.
- XII. Monks and canons profess a rule of community of goods, yet they hold property.
- XIII. They hold rules made by sinful men more perfect than those made by Christ, letting a monk become a friar, while he may not become a simple priest.
- XIV. They care more for the praise of men than for the praise of God.
- XV. They bind themselves to contradictories, to be dead to the world, and to do worldly business at command of the abbot.
- XVI. They set the worse above the better, man's rule above Christ's; and if any will leave their order for a better life, they persecute him.
- XVII. Their wasteful use of goods belonging to the poor, in dress that is too costly and much too large and loose.
- XVIII. They engross to themselves all the good books, and will neither lend nor use them.
- XIX. They give hospitality only to the rich and oppress the poor.
- XX. They visit widows and orphans, but only to get their property.
- XXI. They mislead lords into persecuting God's servants.
- XXII. They claim licence to commit crime, by denying the right of the civil power to deprive them of property.
- XXIII. They make men leave the study of holy things to attend to worldly business.
- XXIV. They are insatiable, trying to get all property into their dead hands.
- XXV. They are quick to plead in the courts, and, beside, are ready to damn those who deny their demands.
- XXVI. They incite to war and so slay men.
- XXVII. They oppress the meek and uphold the proud.
- XXVIII. They pretend to watch, but sleep more than other men.
- XXIX. They inveigle young children into their orders.
- XXX. Their deceits as to special prayer.
- XXXI. They persecute Christ in the persons of his true disciples.
- XXXII. They blaspheme against the Holy Ghost by stopping preaching.
- XXXIII. They blaspheme the Father by preventing lords from maintaining God's ordinance as to the clergy.
- XXXIV. They do away with the rule, on which they are founded, of abstinence, poverty and labour.
- XXXV. They are strong thieves who rob the church of the spiritual goods of poverty, simplicity, and meekness.
- XXXVI. They mislead lords, interpreting the oath to maintain the church as upholding them in their possessions even if wrongful.
- XXXVII. They are heretics, but they bring charges of heresy against true preachers to blind the people.
- XXXVIII. They accuse true preachers of stirring up strife, but it is themselves who are in fault.
- XXXIX. They care more that respect should be paid to them than to God, and, like the Jews, persecute for fear of losing their possessions and honour.
- XL. They get all lordships into their hands, but will not pay taxes.

þis is of clerkis possessioneris.

Capitulum primum.

*[p. 107 MS.]
Possessioners destroy priesthood, knighthood, and commons.

How they should live as priests.

By worldly possessions they are turned to worldly business in place of devotion.

They take benefices by appropriation,

and do nothing for the parishioners,

but put in a vicar at low pay.

Thus wise clerks are kept out of benefices,

almsdoing stopped,

poor children not sent to school.

They make money by masses;

set no example of holy life,

but retire into cloisters to live at their ease.

*Clerkis possessioneris fordon presthod, knyȝthod & comineris; for þei taken þe ordre of presthod & bynden hem to kepe þis¹ ordre & holi lif & techynge of goddis peple aftir cristis lif & his apostlis, & specialy in verrey mekenesse &² wilful pouert & bisi traueile in techynge of goddis lawe & wilful deþ suffrynge þer-fore. But bi þes worldly possessions and lordischipis þei ben turned to pompe & pride & coueitise & grete bisynesse of worldly plees & worldly festis & seculer lawis, þat deuocion & holy meditacion & studyynge & techynge of cristis holy gospel is forȝeten, & discencion among cristene men brouȝt in, & meynutenynge of wrongis & oppressynge of pore men bi here worldly power and cautelis holden vp. also þei taken benefices wiþ cure bi appropriacion, þat is maad bi fals suggestion & symonye, & techen not þe parischenes goddis lawe ne mynystre hem sacramentis ne releuen pore men wiþ residue of tipes & offrynges. But setten þer a viker or a parische prest for litel cost, þouȝ he be vnable boþe of kunnyng and lif to reule his owene soule, & for pouert of benefis he may not go to scole, ne lerne at hom for bisynesse of newe syngynge & gedrynge of tyþes & mynystre of sacramentis & oþere occupacions. & þus wise clerkis ben putt out fro benefices þat myȝten, couden and wolden teche þe peple þe gospel & goddis hestis, & blynde lederis ful of coueitise, lecherie & oþere synnes brouȝt in; & almes doynge to pore men of þe parische & hospitalite & fyndynge of pore children to scole & so clergie aftirward ben outlawid. also þei taken þe ordre of presthod to seie massis for money, & whanne þei schulden be gostly liȝt of þe world bi opyn ensaumples of holy lif & trewe prechynge of holy writt, as crist comaundid to alle his apostlis & disciplis, þei hiden hem self in gay cloistris & lyuen in lustis of flech & glotonye,

¹ his X.

² in AA.

drounkenesse & ydelnesse & sleep. & as þei feynen þei ben exempt from prechyng, þat crist comaundeþ to prestis, bi profession maad to synful foolis & in cas to sathanas þat techeth hem þe contrarie of goddis comaundementis; & ȝif ony such religious be stirid bi charite & conscience to goo to cristene peple & preche hem goddis lawe he schal be lettid bi anticristis obedience vp payne of dedly synne & prisonynge & sumtyme of bodely deþ. & þus þes possessioneris, & namely religious, leuen goddis comaundement & *werkis of mercy & charite vndon for obedience of synful men, And distroien presthod & trewe techynge & holi lif of þe peple in eche degree. ¶ Also þei distroien knyȝthod bi wiles of þe fend, for þei¹ han grete lordischipis amorteised to hem; bi whiche lordschipis knyȝtis schulden be susteyned to gouerne þe peple & þei moten now faile boþe in noumbre & power; & þis amorteisynge cometh in bi ypocrisie of preiynge be mouþ þat is preised of hem more þan prechyng of þe gospel; but certis þis is² merueile, for none of alle þes þat preien þus whot where his preiynge schal turne in-to his owene dampnacion, and þan is it litel worþ to opere synful men; & almyȝtti god seiþ þat þe sacrafices of wickid men ben abhominable and that he schal curse to here blissynges; & þe preire of þat man þat turneth away his erris to here not goddis lawe is abhominable or cursed; &³ þanne siþ god comaundiþ so often in his lawe boþe olde & newe þat clerkis ne schulden haue non seculer lordischipis & þei hauen so many, & so faste meyntenen hem, here preynge is cursed & abhominable. And ȝif seynt austyn, seynt gregory & seynt bernard & opere seyntis & reson wiþ manere of lyuynge of þes proude possessioneris ben wel souȝt in matere of preiynge, þere wole seue a sentence of grete wepyng & mornynge, schewynge how men ben disceyued bi ypocritis preire boþe in feiþ hope & charite & worldely goodis & pees & reste. for ȝif a lord or a laborer loue betere god þan þes veyn religious & proude & lecherous possessioneris, þe lewid manys preiere is betere

Their luxury.

They claim to be exempt from preaching.

If any of them is moved to preach he is stopped by his obedience,

on pain of prison or even death.

*[p. 108 MS.]

Thus they destroy priesthood.

And they destroy knighthood by having great lordships amortised to them, by which knights ought to be maintained.

This is done by pretence of praying.

Prov. xv. 8.

Prov. xxviii. 9.

God commands that the clergy should hold no lordships.

If a layman love God better than these religious do, his prayer is more worth.

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ omitted AA.

pan alle here crynge & knackyng; & certis it were rapere
 Lordes had better hire them not to say mass. almes to lordis to hire suche proude clerkis to seie neiþer
 masse ne matines in þis cursed lif þan to holde & to meyntene
 Austyn. hem in þis manere preiynge; for her lyf¹ is blasphemye vnto
 god, as austyn seiþ; & þei stiren god of treuþe rapere to
 Gregory. vengauce þan to mercy, as seynt gregori seiþ. And þerfore
 Jerome. seynt ierom criede & wrot to his deþ þat clerkis schulden
 lyue on dymes & offrynges þat is goddis part & not haue
 seculer lordischipis ne worldly riches, but in pouert sue
 'Seynt' bede. cristis cros: & seynt bede wrot to þe² erchebischof of þork
 þat ȝifte of kynges whanne þei ȝauen temporaltes to clerkis
 was most fool ȝeuyng, & telliþ many harmes comynge
 Austyn's example. þer-of; & þerfore whanne seynt austyn sey³ his clerkis
 wexe proude for litel rente þat þei hadden he priede þe
 peple of his cite to taken þe rentis aȝen and suffre hem
 lyue on goddis part, þat ben tiþes & offrynges, as þe holy
 martir possidonye writtiþ of seynt austynes lif. þanne siþ
 trewe techynge of curatis is leid down by apropiacion of
 parische chirches, & knyȝtthod bi amorteysynge of temporal-
 Possessioners destroy the commons by preventing good teaching and good government;
 * [p. 109 MS.] tees is mochel distroied, & þe pore peple hard piled bi
 by oppression in collecting rents and fines; coueitouse clerkis opynly; it sueþ þat þes proude posses-
 sioneris distroien þe comunes of þe lond, siþ þei fordon trewe
 by wrongful liti- techynge bi curatis & clerkis & good * gouernaile bi knyȝttis,
 gation; & ben cruel in gedrynge of here rentis & mercymendis more
 and by waste in pomp and gluttony. þan lordis wolden, and ȝeuen ensaumpel of pride & coueitise
 & wrongful meynntenynge of worldly plees aȝenst riȝt & good
 conscience, & letten almes of curatis, & wasten pore mennys
 liflode in pride & glotonye & worldly array more þan grete
 lordis may wel atteynen to.

Capitulum 2^m.

Possessioners say by their acts that Christ's example is insufficient. Also þes possessioneris seyn in dede þat cristis lif & en-
 saumpel þer-of is insufficient & lif sikerere⁴ bi worldly lawes
 is betre; for þei forsaken pore lif & meke aftir crist & his

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ seþ X.⁴ sikere X.

apostlis, & taken worldly sykernesse for þe betre; & her¹ þei blasphememen crist & ben out of riȝt feiþ. And ȝif þei witten þat cristis lyf² and trewe³ lif of clerkis ensaumplid þer-aftir is best & most esy & most siker for þe soule, þei ben oute of charite to forsake þe best tauȝt [&] ensaumplid of crist, and to take a lif ordeyned of synful foolis & coueitouse of worldly pride & name & auer; & ȝif þei meyntenen stifly þis errour þei ben stronge heretikis.

Capitulum 3^m.

Proude possessioners ben *traitours* of god, of lordis & of þe comune peple. þei ben *traitours* of god, for þei distroien his ordynaunce þat he made for clerkis, & in stede of mekenesse & wilful pouert & discrete penaunce brenge in coueitise, pride & wombe ioie and ydelnesse. & þei bryngen lordis⁴ in þis errour of bileue, þat þei ben in dette to meyntenen hem in þis worldly lif, & þat lordis may not mayntene cristis ordynaunce in clerkis for drede of *anticristis* curs & brekyng of here oþ bi whiche þei ben sworne to meyntene holy chirche; for þat þat is þe fendis chirc[he], þat ben proude clerkis & coueitouse, þei clepen holy chirche to turnen alle þing vpsodoun as *anticristis* disciplis. & þat þat is holy chirche, þat ben trewe techers of cristis mekenesse, wilful pouert & gostly traueile & meyntenours of cristis ordynaunce, þei clepen heretikis & pursuen hem to þe deþ worse þan don heþene men, for no man schulde be hardi to teche & meyntene holy writt aȝenst here cursed lif. & þei bryngen comunes in þis errour, þat ȝif þei taken ony þing preuely or apertly fro *anticristis* chirche & his clerkis þei schullen be cursed & prisoned & dampnyd in helle; ȝe, þouȝ þes worldly coueitouse clerkis lyuen neuere so opynly aȝenst goddis lawe, & techen opynly cursed heresie. & þei techen þe comune peple þat þei schullen haue goddis blissyng & blisse of heuene ȝif þei paien treuly here tiȝes & offryngis to hem, whanne þei lyuen in opyn lecherie & coueitise & don no þing here

Possessioners traitors to God, to lords and commons.

To God, by destroying his ordinance.

To lords, by saying that lords may not enforce Christ's laws on the clergy.

Persecute true teachers.

They teach commons that they must not withhold any payments from Antichrist's church.

¹ per AA. ² omitted X. ³ treule X. ⁴ omitted X. ⁵ omitted X.

gostly office, but bi word & ensauple of euyl lif leden þe peple to helle.

Capitulum 4^m.

They care more
for rules of men
than for rules of
Christ.

*[p. 110 MS.]

A priest or monk
is punished more
for breaking
statutes than for
profane swear-
ing.

Also þes possessioners setten more pris bi reulis of synful men þan bi reulis of ihū crist god & man; for þei taken reulis of synful men as benetis & opere popis and holden hem more perfit þan þe clene reule of crist. & þei cha[r]gen more to breke suche tradiciouns *maad of synful men þan to breke þe comaundementis of god & poyntis of charite; & for to proue þis, loke where a prest or monk schal ben hardere ponyschid for brekyng of þe popis lawe or of benetis reule, 3e, for brekyng of here owene statutis, þan for ydel sweryng of herte & bonys of crist & brekyng of þe holy day; & here-bi may men see where þes possessioners louen & dreden more goddis hestis or synful mennys tradicions.

Capitulum 5^m.

They shelter
themselves under
the name of
saints,

and live most
unsaintly.

3it þes possessioners entren vnder colour of seyntis & lyuen alle aʒenst þes seyntis; for þei comen in vnder colour of seynt benet & seynt austyn to lyue in mekenesse & pouert & bi labour of here hondis for her lifode, and bi ypocrisie þei rennen in-to pride, coueitise, worldly worschipe & welfare & idelnesse, & ben wode whanne men tellen þe soþe of cristis gospel & his pore lif & þe soþe of here owene reule & profes-sion; for bi þis techyng here ypocrise and lesyngis schulde be knowen, & þei be turned to here first ground or ellis forsaken al. & þis wheren grete peyne for proude men & delicat; & þerfore þei maken a scheld of ypocrisie & worldly frendischipe aʒenst þis treuþe.

Capitulum 6^m.

They slander the
saints to justify
their own false
pride.

Also þes proude possessioners lien on seyntis & sclaunderen hem wiþ worldly lif to coloure þer-by here owene false pride; for þei writen þat þis is benetis lif & thomas of canterburies,

whanne þei lyueden & endeden in contrarie manere. And þei bryngen forþ poyntis of here worldynesse whanne þei diden aȝenst holy lif & techynge of crist, & hiden here grete sorowe & penaunce þat þei diden for s[i]ch wildenessis; & alle þis is for þei wolden coloure here owene synne bi þes seyntis & maken þe peple wene þat þes seyntis camen to heuene bi þis mirþe of worldly lyuyng & likyng of here flesch; & þus þei brengen cristene¹ peple in errour aȝenst þe feiþ bi lesyngis putt on seyntis.

They bring out the worldly deeds which saints did,

and hide their repentance.

Capitulum 7^m.

þes proude possessioners ben þeues & heretikis; for þei comen bi false menys as ypocrisie & lesyngis to þes grete lordischipes & bi colour to spende hem in almes of pore men, but þei wasten hem in glotony & pompe & pride & worldely gaynesse, as pelure & costelewe² cloþis & proude slitterede squyerys & haukis & hondis & mynstralis & ryche men; & bi colour þat crist was þus worldly lord, þerfore þei schulden haue þus seculer lordischipis bi heritage of crist as his most worþi seruauntis; but crist seiþ in þe gospel of seynt ion þat his kyngdom is not of þis world, & hadde not bi worldly lordischipis where onne to resten his owene hed; þerfore it is heresie to putten þis seculer lordischipe on crist, & herbi disceyuen cristene men in feiþ & worldly goodis, & maken hem to meynutenen clerkis in here³ heresie.

They get possessions under pretence of spending them in alms,

and waste them in gluttony and gay clothes,

and attendants, hawks, hounds, and minstrels.

John xviii. 36.

Capitulum 8^m.

Also þes ypocrit is possessionerschargen hem self more þan crist *and his apostelis wolden or myȝtten, & wittingly take þe werse & leuen þe betre. For bi als moche as þei haue seculer possessions more þan crist & his apostlis hadden þei ben bi þat bounden þe more, & þei ben bounden to holy lif & trewe techynge bi presthod in as mochil as þei may þerfore; & þei taken bisynesse of þe world & leuen studyng & in worldly business,

They take more burdens upon themselves than Christ and the apostles, *[p. 111 MS.]

¹ cristis AA. ² costelewo X. ³ his X (corrected by a later hand).

techyng of holy writt & deuocioun in preiere & þinkyng
of heuenely swettenesse; & þei chesen rapere to lyue vnder
and in rules of their orders; of synguler obedience & profession maad to worldly foolis þan
to lyue bi forne of þe gospel in þat fredom þat crist ȝaf to
prestis. & þerfore þei ben many times nedid & bi ypocrisie
so they leave God's commands undone, disceyued to leue goddis hestis vndon & to performe þe
wrongful biddynge of anticrist; & bi þis feyned obedience
is strif & enuye brouȝt in and pride & worldly lordischipe
and thus rise from good to evil. meyntened in dede men; & þus þei risen fro vertue to
synne, fro mekenes to pride, fro wilful pouert to coueitise
& lordischipe, fro grete penaunce & gostly traueile to glotonye
& ydelnesse.

Capitulum 9^m.

These secular
lordships bring
simony and
covetousness.

Great prelaties
are got by money,
lawsuits, and
fighting.

The religious join
their order for
pride and ease.

They waste
money in riot
and lawsuits.

Thus they
defraud the poor
and are guilty of
bloodshed.

Colossians iii. 5.

The angel that
cried when the

þes seculer lordischipis in clerkis bryngen¹ in symonye,
coueytise & glotonye & ydolatrie, þat is worschipyng of false
goddis; for bi cause of þis lordischipis men comen to grete
prelacies & oþere degres of þe chirche bi money & worldly
fauour & pledynge & fyttyng, where þei schulden come to
hem bi mekenesse and holy lif & bisy traueile in studyng
& techyng of goddis lawe; & feyned religious possessioners
comen to þes ordris for sikernes of worldly welfare & pride
& eise of body, where þe schulden come to hem to be dede
to þe world & to lyuen in penaunce &² streit pouert as cristis
apostlis, & þus þei suen þis holy staat of pouert & penaunce
for worldly riches & wombe ioie. And herfore þei ben ful
of symonye & heresie, as reson & lawe techen, & þei wasten
moche good in ryot & glotonye & pledynge & meynthyng
of wrongis aȝenst pore gentil men & comunes. And siþ al
þes wastid goodis ben pore mennus liflode, as ierom & lawe
techen, & he þat defraudeþ pore men þer-of is a man of blood
spilid, þes possessioners ben mansleeris & irreguler & cursed
of god; & siþ coueitise & glotonye ben seruage of mauȝmetrie,
as poul seiþ, þes possessioners honouren false goddis. for þes
skillis & many mo þe angel seyð ful soþe whanne þe chirche

¹ brengynne X.

² of X.

was dowid þat þis day is venym sched in-to þe chirche; for church was first endowed. þei þat schulden be most meke & wilful pore & in most deuocion & myrrour of alle vertues to worldly men ben now turned in-to luciferis pride & sathanas coueitise and anticristis ypocrisie & ydelnesse, & ben myrrour of alle synnes, & no tonge in þis lif can telle þe harmes her-of.

Capitulum 10^m.

ȝit þes proude possessioners ben anticristis martiris, for þei Possessioners are Antichrist's martyrs. * [p. 112 MS.] ben reised bi hym fro deþ of¹ worldlynesse and vanyte to lif of lordis and werris & falsnesse; for in here profession þei ben holden dede to þe world & vanyte & ² likyng þer-of. They should be dead to the world, But in desiryng & holdyng seculer lordischipis & worldly honour & delicat mete & drynk & gaye cloþis þei schewen in dede þat þei ben riȝt freisch in bodely lif, but I suppose but they show themselves fresh enough in bodily life, þat þei ben dede to holynesse & penaunce & profityng to oþere men; & namely þei schewen þis reisyng in pledyng & werryng in here owene persones, & in counseilyng oþere but are dead to holiness. men to werre on cristene men for worldly goodis; for þat þei don more cruelly þan worldly lordis, as men knowen of pletyng & conseilyng to werris. For in lawsuits and instirring up to war they are worse than lay lords. þerfore it semeþ to summe men þat þei feynen hem dede to gete pray of worldly lordischipis & riches; as þe fox feyneþ hym dede til³ briddis comen to his tounge, & þanne he schewiþ hym on lyue deuouryng & swelwyng of hem; & þus þei ben dede to profityng of oþere men & here temporaltees ben mortesid, They feign death for prey, as the fox does to catch birds. þat is confermyd in þis deþ, for þei comen neuere to seculer men ȝif þei may, þouȝ þei ben getyn bi neuere so fals title & aȝenst conscience; for þei wolen not see mennys riȝt, ne worsche aftir good⁴ conscience, but bosten of þousand markis & þousand poundis þat þei wolen coste in plee bi-fore þat þei They are dead to the profit of others and their land is amortised, confirmed to that death. lesen ony fote of lond; & of suche religious wrecchis seiþ Robert grosted þat siche on is a dede careyne gon out of his They boast how much they will spend in law. sepulcre wlapid with cloþis of mornynge,⁵ dryuen & stirid Grosted.

¹ or X. ² of X. ³ to X. ⁴ omitted X. ⁵ morynge X.

They will spend money and life to maintain their worldly life, but will do nothing to maintain Christ's truth.

Romans viii. 13.

of þe deuyl among men. And for þis worldly lif & coueitise þei wolen coste & die to meyntene it; but for to meyntene þe treuþe of cristis lif in mekenesse & pouert & bisi traueile in prechyng þe gospel þei wolen not traueile, but rapere pursue hem to deþ þat traueilen for þis holy lif; & þus þei lyuen in delices of þe world & here flech, & þerfore þei ben dede to god as poul seiþ, & so þei lyuen anticristis lif & meyntene þat to here deþ aȝenst cristis lif and lawe & techeris þer-of.

Capitulum 11^m.

They stop true men from preaching the gospel.

They are so occupied with the world and with their new customs, that they preach seldom,

and then stories and poetry to get credit for cleverness,

but nothing of Christ's gospel,

and hinder those that would preach it by bulls and persecution,

*[p. 113 MS.]

from fear that Christ's example and their departure from it should be known.

ȝit proude possessioners ben anticristis, for þei letten trewe men to preche þe gospel of ihū crist & suffren not þe peple knowe goddis lawe bi whiche þei schulden be sauȝd. For prestis þus dowid ben so occupied aboute þe world and newe seruyce and song & feyned obedience to worldly foolis þat þei may not studie & preche goddis lawe in contre to cristis peple. ¶ And ȝif þei preche selde whanne þei prechen cronyclis & poisies & newe fyndynges¹ of hem self, & maken false comendaciones of dede men for to geten a name of veyn sotilte & worldly þank, & leuen to preche cristis gospel and his lywyng; & ȝif oþere men wolen treuly & frely preche þe gospel & dispise synne, as crist comaundeþ, þes proude possessioneris² letten hem bi cautelis of anticristis censuris & worldly power & sclaudryng & prisonyng, & dryuen hem *out of londe & ellis brennen hem ȝif þei may. & þis is for drede leeste cristis pore lif & meke & traueilous & peyneful be known, & hou clerkis & namely religious ben bounden to holde sich pore lif & meke & peyneful in³ resonable abstynence, & traueile in⁴ studyng & prechyng of holy writt, & ellis as crist seiþ þei schulde be put out & dispised of men; for bi þis prechyng here worldly lif & coueitise schulde away & penaunce & traueyle come aȝen.

¹ feyndyngis AA.

² possioners X.

³ and X.

⁴ and X.

Capitulum 12^m.

þes proude possessioners ben rotid in lesyngis aȝenst crist & his trewþe, for as seynt bernard & anselme seyn monkis & chanons ben bounden to þe same lif þat pore men of ierusalem helden after sendynge doun of þe holy gost. And þei selden¹ her possessions & putten þe pris to alle cristene in comyn conuertid & þer was no nedy man amongis hem. For it was ȝouen to eche man as² it was nede, & non of hem seide þat ony þing was his owene; but alle þingis weren in comune to hem. but monkis & chanons appropren alle þingis to hem self & not to comunete of cristene men; & þes possessioners seyn in word þat alle þingis ben comune, but in dede þei han proprete & stryuen & pleden þerfore; ȝit seynt ierom & anselm seyn þat þe crowne of clerkis crieth³ pouert, & here cloþinge crieth honeste, holynesse & forsakyng of þe world, & helles here signes ben false & þei ben lesyng-mongeris & lesynge in it-self. but now þei ben riche & proude & coueitouse & ful of enuye & glotonye, & ben þe fendis children for þei louen þus lesyngis, as seynt ambrose seiþ, & þus þei disceyuen þe peple bi ypocrisie.

Monks and canons should live as the first Christians,

who sold their possessions and shared the price with all Christians.

But these hold property,

and falsify the pretence made in their clothing.

Capitulum 13^m.

Possessioners holden þat religion þat crist made lesse perfit þan is religioun founden of a synful man, for þei holden a reule maade not of seyntis but of here owene worldly hedis more perfit þan religion of presthod þat crist⁴ made in his fredom; for þei holden here owene tradicions more perfit þan reulis þat crist made in þe gospel. for ȝif reulis of presthod maad in þe gospel were more perfit þan þe reules of newe monkis, it were laweful for a prest to leue here reules & gon to reulis of presthod as crist made hym in þe gospel, for it is laweful to passe fro þe lasse perfit to þe more perfit, but monkis wolen not suffre for no reson, but þei

Possessioners hold the religion made by Christ less perfect than that made by sinful men;

for they will not let a monk become a simple priest;

¹ senden X. ² omitted X. ³ treith (?), may be creith X. ⁴ omitted X.

yet they will let w[olen] suffre a monk goo to beggeris ordre whanne he axiþ
 him become a leue, þouȝ hee gete it neuere; & þus þei holden þe ordre of
 begging friar. beggeris maad of synful men more perfit þan religion of
 presthod maad of ihū crist god & man.

Capitulum 14^m.

They care more
 for worldly
 wealth and
 praise, than for
 virtue and God's
 praise.

*[p. 114 MS.]

Romans i. 32.

Also þes possessioners dreden more lesynge of here tem-
 poraltees þan loos of goodis of vertue & of charite, & chargen
 more name & preisyng of men þan preisyng and þank of
 god; for þei dreden more to displese lordis & myȝtty men,
 bi seynge & meynthyng of a profitable treuþe, for loos
 of here temporaltees þan to displese god bi suffryng of opyn
 synne & dompnesse, for whiche þei ben *dampnable, as seynt
 poul seiþ; & þei chargen more kepyng of here veyn sygnys
 & customes, for to haue preisyng of men þat þei holden wele
 here religion, þan kepyng of goddis hestis & poyntis of
 charite & discret penaunce for preisyng & þank of god;
 & here is¹ foule ypocrisie & cursed blaspheme & forsakyng
 of god as seynt poul witnesseth plenerly in holy writt.

Capitulum 15^m.

Possessioners
 bind themselves
 to impossibilities,

to be dead to the
 world,

and to do any
 worldly business
 to which their
 abbot calls them.

þes possessioners bynden hem self to contradiccion & þing
 þat is imposible; for þei bynden hem self to be dede to þe
 world & forsaken it & bysynesse, & on þe toþer side þei
 bynden hem to obedience for to take worldli bisynesse aftir
 biddynge² of a worldly & synful & coueitous & vnkunnyng
 abbot or priour, & þis þei moten do bi vertue of þis obedience,
 þouȝ god stire hem to be betre occupied aboute studyng &
 techyng of holy writt, & þus mannus comaundement is
 performyd bi blyndnesse & ypocrisie & goddis comaundement
 & more profit of cristene soules is putte bihynde. But it
 semeþ þei forsaken hunger & þurst³ & penaunce & traueile
 to be lordis & riche & lyue in bodyli ayse on alle sidis; &
 þus þe fend bi his worldly clerkis disceyueþ men by colour

¹ his X.

² byndynge X.

³ prest X.

of holynesse, & bryngeþ hem to worldly lyuyng whanne þei wenen to come out þer-of, & þus casteþ hem bi here owene turn.

Capitulum 16^m.

ʒit religious possessioners ben groundid & holden forþ bi blasphemye & heresie; for þei ben groundid on þis, þat statutis maad of a synful fool ben betere in here dom þan þe lawis þat crist ordeynede for prestis & clerkis, for ellis þei wittingly forsoken¹ þe betre & token² þe worse & helden³ it forth, & weren out of charite. And ʒif þei meyn-
They are blasphemers and heretics,
 tenen an errour aʒenst charite þei ben heretikis; & ʒif þei seyn þat here reulis ben betere þan cristis reulis ʒouen to prestis & clerkis, þei blasphemyn aʒenst god, & so at þe
for they maintain the worse against the better, and are out of charity, and so heretics,
 begynnyng þei ben blasphemys on alle sides or at þe leste knowen not cristene bileue; & in holdyng forþ comynly þei ben blasphemys, for þei letten a prest to lyue & teche
and in setting their rule above Christ's they blaspheme.
 as crist comaundid in þe gospel, & þei letten a cristene man to serue his god in þe beste manere. For ʒif a prest of her feyned ordre wole lyue poreli & iustly & goo freli
Stop priests from good life and teaching.
 aboute & teche frely goddis lawes, þei holden him apostata & prisonen hym, & holden hym cursed for þis prestis lif
If a monk will live poorly and preach, they imprison him.
 comaundid, ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis; & so ʒif a cristene man wole forsake a wickid worldly couent ful of
And a Christian cannot leave a wicked convent,
 pride, ypocrisie, coueitise & symonye, after snybbyng as crist techeþ in þe gospel, þei pursuen him⁴ as apostata & cursed man, for he doþ as crist & his apostelis techen; & þis is cursed blasphemye of god. & ne were þis prison &
otherwise few good men would remain there.
 slaundryng fewe goode men or none schulden dwelle amonge suche couentis for drede of consentyng to⁵ here synnes.

Capitulum 17^m.

*Also þes possessioners wasten bi ypocrisie nedeles many
 pore mennys goodis, for seculer possessioneris han many precious cloþis & costly & riche peluris; & alle þis is wast
Their rich clothing
¹ forsaken X. ² taken X. ³ holden X. ⁴ hem X. ⁵ consenynte of X.

*[p. 115 MS.]

bought out of
poor men's
goods.

Their clothes are
so loose that four
or five men might
be clad from one
monk's hood,
and the great
frock catches the
wind and stops
their work.

of pore mennys goodis, siþ bi here owen lawe what euere clerkis han is pore mennys, & þei schulde teche to cristene men boþe in word¹ & ensauple of here owene dedis þe pouert & symplenesse of crist & his apostlis. Also religious possessioneris wasten pore mennys goodis in wide cloþis & precious, þat foure or fyue nedy men myȝtten welle be cloþed wiþ o cope &² hood of a monke, & þat large cloþ serueþ to gidre wynd & lette him to go & do his dedis; & ȝit þei ben brouȝt in-to chirche to reise vp cristis pouert & his apostlis & lyuen in mornynge and penaunce and to be deed to þe world;³ but by ypocrisie al þis is turned vpsodoun, what in wast meyne and proude and hiȝe houses and glotonie and ydulnesse. And so in ensauple and dede þey techen heresie and blynden⁴ þe people in feith and lyf of crist and his apostles to þe contrarie as cursed disciples of antecrist.

Capitulum 18.

They get hold of
many books in
various ways,

and let them rot
in their libraries,
neither using nor
letting others
use them.

Friars the chief
offenders.

Defensio Cura-
torum. Brown's
Fasciculus, ii. 474.

ȝyt þes possessioners ben þeues and so striers of clergie and of good lif in the people, for þei han manie bokes, and namely of holy writt, Summe by bygging and some by ȝifte and testamentis and some bi⁵ opere disceitis and sutiltees, and hyden hem from seculer clerkis & suffren þes noble bokes wexe roten in here libraries, & neiþer wolen sillen⁶ hem ne lenen hem to opere clerkis þat wolden profiten bi studiynge in hem & techen cristene peple þe weie to heuene. & in þis defaute ben religious mendynauntis as principal þeuys & forgoeris of anticrist, þat seculeris & curatis may almost gete no bok of value, and herby, as seynt Richard primat of irland witnesseþ, þei casten to distroie clergie⁷ of seculeris and trewe techynge of þe peple. lord siþ þes bokis ben more nedeful to mannys good lif þan gold or siluer, & he⁸ is out of charite þat seeþ his broþer haue nede of worldly sustenaunce & helpiþ him not whanne he may esely; hou moche more ben þes religious out of charite, þat helpen not

¹ world X.

² omitted X.

³ worldly AA.

⁴ bynden X.

⁵ omitted X.

⁶ omitted X.

⁷ clergise AA.

⁸ omitted X.

seculer clerkis & curatis of þes bokis neiþer be ȝifte ne leuyng ne sillyng for no¹ money.

Capitulum 19^m.

Clerkis possessioners ben foule out of charite & blynden foule þe peple; for þouȝ þei han many grete houses, costlewe & wasty, & alle þat þei han ouer here strecte² liflode is pore mennys, as here owen seyntis & lawis seyn, ȝit pore men may not be herberwid amongis hem in here grete castelis or paleis, but lordis, & ladies namely, schullen soiouren³ amongis hem many ȝeris. lord, hou schulde þes traitours ben excused at domesday, siþ crist seiþ þo men þat not herberwid suche pore herberweles schullen be dampnyd. where ypocrisie & worldli pride & *coueitise & lecherie schullen make him *[p. 116 MS.] exempt fro dedis of mercy & comaundement of god; for a bayli, stiward & riche men of lawe schullen haue festis & robis & mynystralis, riche cloþis & huge ȝiftis, but pore men schullen stonde with oute & goo dailes but ȝif þei geten knockis & reprouynge & wrong extorsions & euyl paynge of here hire; & ȝit þes mendynauntis passen alle opere possessioners in þis ypocrisie & defaute of pite for to gete worldly þank & grete wynnynge.

They have great costly houses,

and show no hospitality to poor men, but only to lords and ladies.

A bailiff or steward of a rich man shall have feasting and presents,

while poor men shall go 'dailes,' or get knocks and extortion.

Friars the worst of all.

Capitulum 20^m.

þes possessioners ben foule ypocritis vnder name of religion & cursed of crist for here disceitis bi whiche þei disceyuen cristene peple; for whanne seynt iame techiþ þat þis is clene religion James i. 27. anemtis god, to visite fadirles children & moderles & wedewis in here tribulacion, & to kepe hym⁴ self vnblekkid or defoulid fro þis world; þei visiten riche men, & namely wydewis, for to haue here goodis to caymes castel, & sikeren hem of so many massis & preieris duryng þe world; & ȝit þei witte not where here preiere turne to here owene⁵ dampnacion, & be cursed of god, & stire god of holynesse & treuþe to vengauce

Instead of visiting widows in tribulation, they visit rich ones to get their goods,

under pretence of prayers for them.

¹ omitted X.

² streyte AA.

³ soiornen AA.

⁴ hem AA.

⁵ men X.

for here owene wickid lif & ypocrisie. þerfore crist curseþ
 Matt. xxiii. 14. scribis & pharisees, ypocritis, þat eten¹ widewis houses bi
 suche longe preieris. & þei visiten not fadirles children &
 They do not give alms to widows and orphans, moderles and widewis to releue hem bi almes ȝeuyng, but
 enqueren siche children & widewis ȝif þei may disceyue hem
 but cheat them of their property. in purchasyng of here rentis & oþere goodis bi flaterynge
 Friars the worst. wordis & sikernesse of gostly helpe; & in þis ypocrisie þes
 mendynauntis beren þe baner for svtilte & feyned pouert.

Capitulum 21^m.

ȝit þes possessioners blynden lordis & myȝtty men to
 They mislead lords by making them persecute God's servants. turmenten goddis seruauantis, bi prisonyng & oþere bodily
 peyne, whanne þei forsaken proude & coueitouse men endurid
 in here synnes & seruen god in þe beste manere after here
 power & kunnyng bi fredom of þe gospel; & þus þei
 disceyuen lordis in feiþ, hope & charite, & maken lordis þe
 deuylis² turmentours wanne þei hopen to plesse god in meyn-
 tenyng of holy religion.

Capitulum 22^m.

Also þes possessioners, wiþ helpe of false freris, sotil
 ypocritis, & cursed heretikis, dampnen holy writt, þe kyngis
 regalie & wise men of oure lond, for to meyntene here false
 They say that secular lords may not take goods from them for their faults. geten possessions & worldly lif; for þei crien þat it is heresie
 or errour aȝenst goddis lawe þat seculer lordis may take
 temperal goodis fro clerkis trespasyng bi longe custome; &
 certis ȝif seculer lordis may not take temperal goodis fro
 clerkis, þanne þouȝ clerkis trespassen neuere so moche, ȝe
 Then if they conspire against the king, in traiterie, conspiryng þe kyngis deþ & quenys & alle þe
 lordis & ladies & comunes of oure lond, þe kyng may not
 he may not even fine them a far-thing. ponysche hem bi o ferþing worþ, & þanne is goddis lawe
 fals þat ȝeueþ power to kyngis & seculer *lordes to ponysche
 *[p. 117 MS.] generaly, outakiþ no man; & many mo orible conclusions
 suen of þis dampnyng, as men han writen in many placis.

¹ heten X.² deuel X.

Capitulum 23^m.

Possessioners also constreynen prestis to leue studynge of holy writt & deuocion & prechyng, & neden hem bi vertue of obedience & peyne of prisonyng, & dampnacion as þei feynen, to bisien hem nedles nyȝt & day wiȝ worldly occupacion, aȝenst cristis reule & here owene profession, for ellis þei seyn here couent schulde perische & here religion go doun; & þus bi obedience maad to synful man, & in cas to fendis, þei fordon obedience to god lord of al þingis. & ȝif a synful ydiot bidde hem do þe lesse goode, & god biddeþ hem do þe more goode, þei schullen leue þe more good & sterynge of crist & þe holy gost for þis feyned obedience to a synful caitif; & þus whanne þei¹ bynden hem to forsake þe world & be dede þer-to, þei ben quekenyd bi anticristis obedience & maade more worldly þan ony oþere men.

They force priests to leave study of holy things,

and to busy themselves with worldly affairs,

and set man's commands above God's.

Capitulum 24^m.

Also þes possessioners ben neuere ful of worldly goodis & secular lordschipis, but euere purchasen, be it riȝt be it wrong, bi gold, be ypocrisie² of preiere² & bi pardons; for þe coueitouse man schal not be fulfillid wiȝ money, as god seiȝ; & so þei breken þe reule of crist tauȝt & comaundid bi saint poul to alle prestis: we hawynge liflode & couerynge be we apeied wiȝ þes þinges; & þus is ieromyes prophecie fulfillid þat fro þe leste to þe moste þei studien to coueitise. & siȝ þei may not gouerne wel þe peple as lordis schulden, þei wolle not cesse til alle be conquerid in-to here dede hondis to distroie lordis & comunes & holy lif of prestis; & certis oþer þei ben of more myȝt & witt to do boȝe temperal office & spiritual to-gidre þan weren crist & his apostlis, or elles þei ben foolis disceyued bi pride & coueitise of þis world; for crist & his apostlis couden not or myȝt not or wolde not do³ þes offices to-gidre, but weren fully occupied wiȝ spiritual office; & þus þes possessioners sclaundren cristis lif & ben out of feiȝ, hope & charite, & harde rotid in heresie.

They are always getting goods and lordships.

Eccus. xiv. 9.

I. Tim. vi. 8.

Jer. vi. 13.

Trying to have all things in their dead hands,

they must be more able than Christ and his apostles,

who found spiritual office full occupation; thus they are rooted in heresy.

¹ þis AA. ²⁻² omitted X. ³ to X. corrected by a later hand.

Capitulum 25^m.

These forsakers
of the world are
ready to plead in
court;

besides that, they
will curse for
goods worth a
groat.

They should be
willing to give up
all their goods to
save one soul.

St. Bernard.

*[p. 118 MS.]

In many cases it
is lawful to refuse
tithes;

Yet even in such
cases they take
a man's goods,
hurt his body and
damn his soul.

These tithes
should be poor
men's livelihood.

þes possessioners þat bynden hem to perfit conseilis of crist
& to forsake þe world ben moste bisy to stryue and plede for
worldly possessions bi londis lawe, & curse also for dymes,
þe, for foure¹ penyworþ good curse many þousand soules to
helle. lord! hou ben þei in charite, for so litel good damp-
nynge so many soulis, as moche as in hem is; siþ þei schulden
lese alle worldly goodis, þe and here owene lif, for to saue o
soule bi þe lawe of charite. certes þes ben religious of anti-
cristis & sathanas þat maken so grete stryues & discencions,
& to brynge men out of charite for to geten to hem a litel
drit of temperal goodis. litil setten þei bi seynt bernardis
word, þat what euere þou haldest to þe of tyþes & offryngis
ouer symple liflode * & streit cloþing, it is not þin; it is þefte,
raueyne & sacrelegie. in many casis² sugetis may leffly wiþ-
holde³ tiþis by goddis lawe & mannys also; þan it is sathanas
werk & anticristis to curse a man for he wole not paie his
tiþes to a cursed man, aʒenst goddis lawe & mannys & aʒenst
his conscience ryʒtfully groundid, & þerfore bereue him his
catel, peyne his body, & dampne his soule. Siþ crist & his
apostlis curseden neuere ne tauʒten to curse for tiþes, but þe
contrarie, as þe gospel techeþ; & siþ þes teþes ben geten to
hem bi fals suggestion & meny tymes by symonye, & ʒit ben
superflue to hem, alle þes tiþes ben pore menus liflode, & þei
ben manquelleris in defraudynge it & manyfold cursed &
groundid in gret heresie.

Capitulum 26^m.

They incite to
war,

and so are mur-
derers.

Also þes possessioners ben counseillours to many þousand
mennus deþ for to meyntene here possessions & worldly lif;
for þei conseilien lordis to werre vpon cristene men for to kepe
here lordischipis & worldly lif in reste; & siþ fiʒttere &
conseilere þer-to ben mansleeris bi goddis lawe & mannys,
alle þes possessioners ben manquelleris & irreguler, & as

¹ omitted X.

² caas X.

³ stonde X.

ysaye seiþ, for here hondis ben ful of blode god schal not Isaiah i. 15.
 here hem in preieris; but as god seiþ be þe prophete malechie Malachi ii. 2.
 god schal curse to here blysyngis; & whanne sicke men gon
 wiþ ora pro nobis in procession¹ þei blasphememen god & stiren
 him to vengauce, as austyn & gregori techen pleyonly.

Capitulum 27^m.

þes possessioners ben specyaly cristis enemys & anticristis, They despise the meek
 for þei dispisen & sclaudren & pursuen meke men & pore,
 & enhaunsen & preisen & fauoren proude men² & disolute; and support the proud.
 for ȝif þer be ony among hem þat drawe hem³ to pouert
 & deuocion & reproue here pride & ypocrisie, he schal
 be clepid ypocrite, distroier of holy chirche, & sumtyme
 prisoned, þat it were betre to him dwellen among heþene
 þan in suche congregacions; & he þat is glorious to þe world
 & sotil to gete worldly muk or drit of worldly frendischipe,
 þouȝ he leue his deuocion & goddis seruyce, he is a noble
 man & wole meyntene holy chirche; & þus þei ben cursed
 of god, for þei seyn þat good is euyl & euyl good.

Capitulum 28^m.

ȝit þes possessioners disceyuen men by ypocrisie & waster
 moche good in veyn; for þei feynen hem to rise at mydnyȝt, They pretend to rise at midnight, so they waste candles and take more sleep by day than they lose by night.
 & spenden liȝt & oþere costis maken, & bi day slepen moche
 more þer-fore, þat alle þingis accountid þei han moche more
 tyme to slepe þan ony oþere commen men. & þus þei faren
 as þeues, slepynge on þe day & wagyng in þe⁴ nyȝt to robbe They are like thieves.
 men of here catel by ypocrisie of þis wakyng & preiynge,
 & herbi þei turnen þe nyȝt in-to day & day in-to nyȝt &
 maken moche wast.

Capitulum 29^m.

Also þes possessioners maken goddis houses a deen of They make God's house a den of thieves, * [p. 119 MS.]
 þeues; *for þey maken here chirches placis of marchaundise
 for wynnynge and bryngenge in ȝonge children in-to here using it to inveigle young

¹ profession X.² omitted X.³ omitted AA.⁴ omitted AA.

children into
their order.

religion, bi ȝiftis & certeyn of welfare & eise of bodi, & norischen hem in glotonye & coueitise; & geten priuylegies of kyngis to meyntene eche þef in here place wiþ-uten restitution, & stryuen & pleden to meyntenen þis wrong priuylegie more þan þe best reule of here ordren or ony poynt of charite.

Capitulum 30^m.

Their deceits as
to special prayers.

ȝit þes possessioners disceyuen lordis bi feynynge¹ of special preieris; for þei maken lordis to bileue þat here special preiere, as *famulorum* & *benefactorum*, schal turne to lordis aftir grauntynge & lymytinge of synful foolis, & more principaly to hem for here worldly goodis ȝeuyng þan to opere men þat ben in more charite; & þus þe riȝtful delynge of god for þe goode lif of men is forȝeten, & delynge of synful foolis þat knowen not þe ablenesse of men & riȝtful dom of god is holden forþ; & herby myȝtty men ben brouȝt out of bileue to triste more in special preynge & applynge of synful men þan in þe riȝtful partynge of god & riȝtwisnesse of here owene lif, & bi trist of suche special preieris lordis vnderstonden þat þei schulden be excused þouȝ þei don euyl in here owen lif. lorde! siȝ none of alle þes religious whot where his preiere turne to his owene dampnacion, houdoren þei chaffaren þus wiþ worldly possessions & rentis for here preieris; siȝ þei owen to wyten þat here preieris ben cursed & abhominable to god, for þei breken cristis hestis in holdynge þus seculer lordischipis, & lyuen in pride, coueitise, ypocrisie, glotonye & ydelnesse, þat drawen hem to synne of sodom & maken hem worschiperis² of false goddis.

Men are led to
believe more in
special prayer
than in God's
justice and in
good life.

They ought to
know that their
prayers are a-
bominable to God
for their many
sins.

Capitulum 31^m.

They persecute
Christ,

for they persecute
true teachers,

Clerkis possessioners pursuen crist to deþ & bitraien him for stynkyng drit; for þei sclaudren, cursen & pursuen falsly to deþ trewe techers of cristis lif & goddis hestis þat

¹ fynynge X.

² worschiperis X.

wolden saue mennys soulis bi trewe & free prechyng of þe gospel wiþ-uten glosynge & beggyng; & þei suffren, helpen & meynntenen false prechouris, gloseris, to robbe þe peple bi fals beggyng, bi symonye & ypocrisie & blasphemye putt vpon crist; so þat¹ possessioners may holden forþe here secular lordischipis & worldli lif aȝenst goddis lawe, in distroyng & blasphemynge of cristis lif and cristene feiþ, in distroyng of secular lordis & oþere prestis & curatis & of comunes also, as it is seid bifore; & as crist seiþ þis false sclaudryng & pursuyng of cristis disciplis for þis ende is pursuyng of crist & of þe holy trinyte.

and maintain
false beggars.

Capitulum 32^m.

Ȝit þes possessioners blasphemen aȝenst þe holy gost; for þei wolen not suffre men to fulfille his wille ne his ȝiftis & saue mennys soulis bi trewe techyng of goddis hestis & poyntis of charite, *but constreynen men bi gret violence & turment to leue goddis stiryng² & goddis lawe & wille vndon. For þei feynen þat men schulden not teche goddis lawe wiþ-uten here leue. And þei wolen ȝeue no leue whanne men wolen vtterly teche þe pouert & mekenesse & bisy traueile of crist & his apostlis & prechyng þe gospel, & dampnen here coueitise & pride & worldly lif & ydelnesse & ypocrisie; & þus as moche as is in hem þei distroien þe holy gost & þe holy trinyte; & ³specialy bi ³þis ypocrisie þat no man schul preche wiþ-uten here leue. for siþ þei ben ennemyes of crist & his lawe, as it is schewid bi here opyn euyl lif, & in caas deuelis of helle, þei casten þat no man schal teche trewely cristis lawe wiþ-uten leue of cristis traitour & of deuelis in helle; & so prestis ben constreyned bi bodily peynes & deþ to leue goddis wille & precept for contrarie comaundement of goddis traitour, & in caas a deuyl in flech, as ihū crist seiþ of iudas scarioþ.

They blaspheme
against the Holy
Ghost
by forbidding
men to preach
without their
leave,
*[p. 120 MS.]

which they will
not give to one
who will preach
truly Christ's
poverty.

John vi. 70.

¹ X inserts þe.

² suryng X.

³⁻³ special al AA.

Capitulum 33^m.

They blaspheme
against the
Father,
in that they pre-
vent lords from
maintaining
God's ordinance
as to the clergy,

þes proude possessioners blasphemen aʒenst þe myȝt of þe
fadir; for bi here worldly power & sotilte & malice þei
letten lordis power, þat þei may not meyntene goddis ordy-
nannce in þe clergie & saue here owene soulis & gouerne
wel here¹ tenauntis & comunes; & bi þe same cautel þei
letten prestis to teche treuely & freely goddis lawe & his
ordynaunce bi power grauntid of god, last here pride &
worldly worschipe be brouȝt doun, & mekenesse & holynesse
ensaumplid of crist and his apostlis knowen & kept, &
ypocrisie & oþere synnes aspied² & distroied; & so as
anticrist þei magnifyen hem self & here power more þan
god & his power.

and so magnify
themselves above
God.

Capitulum 34^m.

They profess
abstinence,
but turn to glut-
tony;

poverty,
but turn to
covetousness;
labour,

but turn to sale
of prayers and
idleness.

ȝit þes possessioners turnen abstinence & penaunce in-to
glotonye, & traueile in-to ydelnesse, & pouert in-to coueitise;
for þei ben groundid in abstynence after crist & his apostlis,
& namely þes newe religious, & þei turnen hem in-to glotonye
& delicat liflode more comynly þan oþere men; & þei ben
groundid on pouert aftir crist & his apostlis, but þei ben
turned in-to worldly coueitise bi³ many sotiltes & ypocrisie;
& þei ben groundid on labor of here hondis bi here owene
reule, & ȝit þei turnen þat labor in-to preieris bi mouþ⁴ &
ben idel & veyn; & þus bi colour of holynesse þei stiȝen
in-to synnes on eche side.

Capitulum 35^m.

They say that he
who takes tem-
poral goods from
the Church is a
thief;
they rob the
Church of
spiritual goods,

Proude possessioners ben perilous þeues & cursed heretikis;
for þei affermen who euer takiþ ony temperal goodis fro holy
chirche, þat is þe comynthe⁵ of clerkis aftir here dom, he is a
þeef⁶ & cursed in dede; þanne siþ þei taken away þe noble
gostly good of wilful pouert & symplenesse & mekenesse, in

¹ omitted AA. ² aspied X. ³ and AA. ⁴ monye X. ⁵ comutiete X. ⁶ ȝeef X.

whiche *vertues* crist groundid holy chirche, þei ben stronge þeues & *anticristis* disciplis. & siþ þei meyntenen so harde and are strong thieves. þis wickid þeeftē, & robben holy chirche fro þis noble tresor of pouert & mekenesse, and defoulen it wiþ drit of worldly lordischiþe aʒenst þe *wille of ihū crist here spouse, þei ben *[p. 121 MS.] cursed heretikis & here meyntenours also, & þus þei ben *anticristis* peruertynge cristendom.

Capitulum 36^m.

ʒit þes possessioners bryngen lordis out of bileue, & maken They deceive lords as to the meaning of oaths. hem bi blynde swerynge meyntene þe coueitise & worldly lif of *anticristis* clerkis, whanne bi *vertue* of here oþ þei schulden distroie þe false coueitise & pride of worldly clerkis: for þes lordis sweren to meyntenen þe¹ priuylegyes & freedoms & riʒttis of holy chirche; & bi þis oþ þei moten nedis Lords swear to maintain the rights of the Church. meyntenen þe perfit fredom of holy lif, of mekenesse & pouert & oþere goode *vertues* þat crist ordeyned to þe chirche; but Antichrist's clergy say this means their false possessions *anticristis* clerkis chalengen² bi þis oþ þat lordis owen to meyntene here false lordischiþis, pride & coueitise, & wrong and wrong customs, customes of *prescripcion* aʒenst goddis lawe³ & good conscience; for ʒif þes *anticristis* clerkis han holden wrongfully a cristene mannys good lond oþer rentis⁴ or oþer goodis bi as when they claim land by prescription, though wrongfully obtained. þritti ʒeer or fourty with-uten ony axynge, þei seyn þis synful possession so longe contynued makih hem worldly lordis of þis good; & þus þei maken lordis to meyntene fraudis & falsnesse aʒenst goddis hestis, whanne lordis wenen to meyntene riʒtful lawes for worschiþe of god; but *certis* here is moche þefte, moche treson & moche harm of soulis on eche side meyntened bi þis blynde swerynge.

Capitulum 37^m.

Also þes possessioners dampnen trewe men techynge frely They condemn true preachers of the gospel as heretics, & trewely þe gospel & goddis hestis for heretikis, for to coloure here owen worldly⁵ lif, but þei hem self ben foule

¹ per X.² chalagen X.³ omitted X.⁴ trentis AA.⁵ omitted X.

while they are
heretics,

but will not bear
to be reprovèd;

as Scribes and
Pharisees im-
puted sin to
Christ and his
disciples.

heretikis for here cursed pride, coueitise & enuye þat þei dwellen inne & meynntenen strongly; but of þis verry heresie & most perilous wolen þei not þenke ne speke, ne suffre oþere trewe men to speke aʒenst it for to saue here soulis & helpe oþere men out of synne. & þus þei faren wiþ cristene men & holy writt as diden scribis & phariseis wiþ crist & his apostlis & his gospel, & whanne þes pharisees, scribis & hiʒe prestis weren ful of heresie & blasphemye þei putten alle þes synnes on crist & his apostlis to blynde þe comune peple, & so þes possessioners don now bi more ypocrisie & more sotilte & more cruelte.

Capitulum 38^m.

They slander
true preachers
as cause of
strife,

but they are the
real causes of dis-
sension,

by spending the
property of the
poor in litigation

*[p. 122 MS.]

and by persecu-
tion of true men.

þes proude possessioners disclaundren trewe prechours of þe gospel & cristis lif for makeris of discencion & debate among neiʒeboris in þe lond; whanne þei hem self wiþ here cursed lif & confederacie wiþ tirauntis for here gold ben cause of discencion & enemyte. for wiþ pore mennus liflode þei hiren myʒtty men to stryue & plede aʒenst goddis techynge, & helpe & releuyng & encressynge of seculer lordis, & helpe & releuyng of pore comunes; & þus as cursed pharisees & scribis & hiʒe prestis þei putten here owen cursed synnes vpon trewe men to lette goddis lawe to be knowen, & hiden & colouren & ¹ *meyntenen here olde synnes and traitere bi strong pursuyng to deþ of alle trewe men as moche as þei may, & herbi þei ben manquelleris & pursueris of crist & endurid in ² old heresie.

Capitulum 39^m.

They expect to
be regarded as
holy while they
lead a worldly
life,
and will not be
reprovèd.

Also þes possessioners magnifyen hem self more þan ihū crist, & seken more here owene name & honour þan honour of god & helpe of cristene soulis; for þei axen & coueiten name of holynesse & reuerence wiþ þis proude worldly lif, & þat schal no man reprove hem of here opyn ypocrisie, symonye & coueytise: & ihū crist myʒtte not kepe holynesse

¹ omitted AA.

² X inserts "he."

wiþ suche worldly lif & axe such worldly reuerence as þes possessioners don. And ihū crist was redy to be reproued of his enemyes ȝif þei myȝtten fynde ony defaute in him. but ȝit¹ þes possessioners ben ful of synne, & þouȝ þei ben most bounden to pacience, mekenesse & charite ȝit þei ben wode whanne men wolen amende here cursed lif bi techynge of þe gospel; & ȝif men dispisen hem or don not worldly reuerence to hem þei ben wode wroþ & wolen be vengid vp al here myȝt; but þouȝ men dispisen god in here presence bi cursed swerynge or opere synnes þei chargen not, & ȝit þouȝ here owene seruauntis do so, þat is worse to hem, þei chargen it² not. but as þe iewis diden crist to deþ for drede of lesyng of here lordschipe & worldly name & honour, so þes possessioners don here power to do alle trewe men to deþ þat techen cristis gospel & mekenesse & pouert aȝenst here false newe lawis & pride & coueitise, & hou þei enuenymyn cristendom bi word & dede.

Christ was willing to be reproved.

They are angry if respect is not paid to them, but they do not mind men, even their servants, swearing in their presence.

The Jews put Christ to death from fear of losing honour and lordship,

so these possessioners would do with true men now.

Capitulum 40^m.

ȝit þes ypocritis possessioners ben traitouris to god, to lordis, & to comunes also; for þei han almost þe tresor of þe lond & worldly lordschipe, aȝenst goddis lawe; & whanne þe kyng haþ nede of a taxe, þei wolen not paie for pore men, not wiþstondynge þat þei ben procuratouris of pore men, & al þat þei han³ ouer here owen symple liflode is pore mennus good, as goddis lawe & mannus techen opynly, but for to plede & meyntene wrongis & putten men out of here lond & meyntenen false praelegies aȝenst charite & good conscience þei han þousand markis & poundis; & here þei chalengen aboue crist & alle his apostlis þat þouȝ þei han almost alle⁴ lordschipis amortised to hem, ȝit þei wolen not paien tribute ne taxe⁵ to þe kyng for meyntenaunce of þe rewme & sauynge of pore mennus lif; & ȝit crist paide for him & his disciplis tribute to þe emperoure, þouȝ he hadde

They get all the treasure of the land into their hands, and will not pay taxes;

but in lawsuits they will spend a thousand pounds.

They will not pay tribute;

yet Christ paid tribute to the Emperor.

¹ omitted AA.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

⁴ alle is added in X. by a later hand.

⁵ axe AA.

They challenge
this exemption
by Antichrist's
power.

*[p. 123 MS.]

non such *temperaltees*. & þis exempciō þei chalengen bi *anticristis* power & not bi god almyȝtty, for he constreyneþ clerkis to be suget to secular lordis & to lyue a iust lif & symple & pore wiþ-uten worldly lordschipe *& opyn beggyng in a¹ *vertuous* mene. god almyȝtty stireþ prestis, lordis & comunes to knowe ypocrisie, heresie & treson of *anticristis* worldly clerkis, & knowen & meynutenen þe riȝtful ordynaunce of god & þe *perfit* fredom of þe gospel. Amen.

¹ omitted AA.

VII.

HOW THE OFFICE OF CURATES IS ORDAINED
OF GOD.

I HAVE already said (in the Preface to No. IV.) that I think this tract to be by another hand than Wyclif's, but the tone of thought is very like his. The date of it is evidently after 1383, as Bishop Spenser's crusade in Flanders is mentioned as a thing of the past (Chapter XVI.).

When we read the complaint (Chap. XXII.) of the clergy who leave their parishes and go to school (that is, of course, to the University), in order to lead a loose life there, we are not suppose that the writer had any dislike to the Universities. Oxford was a chief centre of Wyclifite influence, and Wyclif himself, in 1368, received from his bishop two years' leave of absence from his living (Fillingham) to study at Oxford, where, our tract tells us, "good priests traveilen faste to lerne goddis lawe." Its author had rubbed shoulders with the men who went to study "Civil and Canon," and did little good thereat, or at most learned to "crack a little Latin in Consistories." The scholar is as indignant against fast men who degrade the seat of learning, as the reformer against priests who neglect their parishes. We may suppose the writer to be one of Wyclif's Oxford friends—perhaps Herford or Purvey.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Curates care too much for worldly goods.
- II. Men run about after benefices and buy them. The money thus spent would be better employed in reducing taxation.
- III. Wayward curates are Satans transformed into angels of light—angels not of God but of the devil.
- IV. Curates study law books instead of the Bible.
- V. They go to law for trifles of tithe, bringing heavy charges on their subjects, or cursing and imprisoning them.
- VI. They set their parishioners an example of worldliness.

- CHAP. VII. They teach men to war ; they despise the poor and flatter the rich.
- VIII. They will not teach Holy Writ nor let others teach it.
- IX. They waste the money of the poor in pomp and luxury.
- X. They serve lords in worldly business and neglect God's work.
- XI. They welcome cheating pardoners, but hinder true preachers.
- XII. They neglect God's command to preach.
- XIII. They excommunicate for not paying tithes, but not for sin.
- XIV. They waste the money of the poor in hawking and hunting.
- XV. They haunt taverns, play games of chance, and get drunk.
- XVI. Refuse the sacrament to those who do not pay tithes, or will not contribute to wars such as Spenser's crusade.
- XVII. They take benefices without knowing the gospel, and teach the people evil.
- XVIII. They relate chronicles and stories of false miracles to mislead the people.
- XIX. They go shares with pardoners, who deceive the people.
- XX. They hate good priests and love bad ones.
- XXI. Wicked curates take refuge in lords' courts, and use the protection of lords to avoid discipline.
- XXII. They go under pretence of study to the Universities, and lead a riotous life there.
- XXIII. The more learned of them use the Civil and Canon Law to annoy the poor, and neither have nor care for knowledge of the Bible.
- XXIV. They let worldly clerks condemn God's law, and stop true preachers ; while they preach the traditions of Antichrist.
- XXV. They study Civil and Canon Law and neglect God's law.
- XXVI. They forbid the people to judge their words or deeds.
- XXVII. They forbid laymen to read the Gospel in their mother-tongue.
- XXVIII. They deceive men as to absolution, leading them to trust in shrift and gifts rather than in contrition and amendment.
- XXIX. They rob people by their pitiless excommunications.
- XXX. They take tithes according to neither Testament, but according to sinful laws.
- XXXI. They get benefices by simony, and neglect them afterwards.
- XXXII. Under pretence of liberties of the Church they make the people maintain bad priests in their evil ways.
- XXXIII. They say that if these bad ways are maintained, priests' prayers will bring reward, but any attempt to reform priests is cursed. Final apostrophe to curates.

Hou þe office of curatis is ordeyned of god.

In dei nomine. Amen.

[Capitulum 1.]

For þe office of curatis is ordeyned of god & fewe don it wele & many ful euyle, þerfore telle we summe defautis¹ to amende hem wiþ goddis helpe. First þei ben more bisi aboute worldly goodis þan vertues & goode kepyng of mennus soulis; for he þat can best geten riches of þis world to-gidre & holde grete houshold & worldly aray, he is holden a worþi man of holy chirche, þouȝ he conne not þe leste² poynt of þe gospel; & such on is preised & born vp of þe bischop & here officeris at þe fulle; but þat curat þat ȝeueþ him to studie holy writt & teche his³ paryschenys to saue here soulis, & lyueþ in mekenesse, penaunce & bisi traueile a boutte gostly þingis, & reckiþ not of worldly worschipe & riches, is holden a fool & distroiere of holy chirche, & is⁴ dispised & pursued of hiȝe prestis & prelati & here officeris, & hatid of oþere curatis in contre; & þis makith many curatis to be neegligent in here gostly cure & ȝeue hem to occupacion & bisynesse of worldly goodis. þes neegligent curatis þenken ful⁵ litel hou dere crist bouȝte mannys soule wiþ his precious blood & deþ, & hou harde rekenynge schal he make at domes day for þes soulis. certis it semeþ þat þei ben out of cristene mennys feiþ; for þei maken hem not redy to come þedir & answeere wel hou þei camen in-to here benefices & hou þei lyueden & tauȝten & spendiden pore mennus goodis; for ȝif þei hadden þis feiþ redy in here mynde þei wolden bigynne a betre lif & cōtynue þer-inne.

Faults of curates.

More busy about worldly things than about men's souls.

He that is rich is praised by the bishop,

but a poor meek priest is despised and persecuted.

Negligent curates are out of the faith,

or they would live better.

¹ defaute AA. ² beste X. ³ is X. ⁴ omitted X. ⁵ omitted AA.

Capitulum 2^m.

They will run
after fat bene-
fices,

but will not go a
mile to preach
the gospel.

Col. iii. 5.

Guilty of simony.

Gold sent out of
the country to
buy benefices
*[p. 124 MS.]

were better spent
to relieve the
commons from
taxes;

and simony
should be for-
bidden under
severe penalties.

þe secunde defaute. þei rennen faste bi lond & watir in grete *perilis* of bodi & soule for to geten fatte benefices, but þei wolen not goo comunly a myle for to *preche* þe gospel, þouȝ *cristene* men rennen to helle for defaute of knowynge & kepyng of goddis lawe. & *certis* here þei schewen in dede þat þei ben foule blend¹ with coueitise, & worschipe false² goddis, as seynt poul seiþ, siþ þe[i] louen so moche worldly richesses & so moche traueilen þerfore nyȝt & day in þouȝt & dede, & so litel traueilen for goddis worschipe & sauynge of *cristene* soulis. but who may excuse þes coueitouse clerkis fro symonye & heresie in þis poynt? neiþer goddis lawe ne mannys, ne reson, ne good conscience. & hou myche gold goþ out of oure lond for purchasyng of benefices in-to *aliens hondis, & hou moche is ȝouen priuely to men in þe lond, late þe kyng & his witti conseil enquere, & þei schal fynde many þousand poundis: & late alle þat helpe þe comunes in þis grete talliage, & late alle clerkis be warnyd & charged³ by þe kyng^{3 4} & lordes of þe rewme⁴ þat þei don no more symonye for benefices, vp peyne of lesynge of here benefices & prisonynge & exilynge; siþ þis symonye makip hem chef heretikis as here owene lawe seiþ plenerly, & þat þei may not be sauyd but ȝif þei forsake þe benefice geten bi symonye, and alle here fautours & consentours to þis symonye rennen in þe same dampnacion as goddis lawe & *mannus* witnessen.

Capitulum 3^m.

Wayward curates
are Satans trans-
formed into
angels of light;

do not preach
Christ's gospel;

þe þridde defaute of weiward curatis þat þei ben aungelis of helle & ben sathanas *transfigurid* in-to an aungel of liȝt to⁵ lede men queyntely to helle; for in-stede of trewe techynge of *cristis* gospel þei ben doumbe, or elles tellen lesyngis of mennys *tradicions* for pride & coueitise of worldly goodis; & for ensauple of good lif þei sclaudren here parischenys

¹ blent AA. ² falser X. ³⁻³ omitted X. ⁴⁻⁴ omitted AA. ⁵ and AA.

many weies bi ensauple of pride, enuye, coueitise & vnre- set bad examples;
 sonable vengauce, so cruely cursynge for tipes & euyll curse for tithes.
 customes; & for ensauple of holy deuocion & deuout preiere
 & werkis of mercy þei techen in-dede ydelnesse, glotonye,
 dronkenesse & lecherie, & meyntenynge of þes synnes & many
 moo. For siþ prestis ben clepid aungelis in holy writt, & þes Malachi ii. 7.
 curatis bryngen not message of god but of þe fend, as here
 wickid lif scewiþ,¹ þei ben not aungelis of god but aungelis of
 þe fend; & þe trewe clerk robert grosted writiþ to þe pope Grosted.
 þat curatis ben sathanas transfigurid in-to aungel of liȝt for
 þei prechen² not cristis gospel bi word & good lif, þouȝ þei
 diden no more synne³; and⁴ siþ seynt petir was clepid sathanas St. Peter called
 of crist, as þe gospel telliþ, for he was contrarie to goddis Satan.
 wille & sauourid not heuenly þingis, wel ben þes euele Matt. xvi. 23.
 curatis clepid sathanas, siþ þei ben more contrarie to goddis
 wille & sauouren less gostly þingis & sauynge of cristene
 soulis.

Capitulum 4^m.

þe fourþe errour; þat þei chargen more statutis of synful They care more
 men þan þe moste resonable lawe of god almyȝtty; for þei for man's law
 dreden more þe popis lawe & statutis maad of bischopis & ⁵ of than for God's.
 oþere⁵ officeris þan þe noble lawe of the gospel, & herefore
 þei han many grete bokis & costly of mannus lawe & studien They have law
 hem faste. But fewe curatis han þe bible & exposiciouns⁶ of books and study
 þe gospelis, ⁷ & litel studien on hem ⁷ & lesse donne after hem. them, but few
 But wolde god þat euery parische chirche in þis⁸ lond hadde priests have the
 a good bible & good expositouris on þe gospellis, & þat þe Bible.
 prestis studiende⁹ hem wel & tauȝten trewely þe *gospel & *[p. 125 MS.]
 goddis hestis to þe peple; for þanne schulde good lif regne, &
 reste & pees & charite; & synne & falsnesse putt a bak. god
 brynge þis ende to his peple. amen.¹⁰

¹ schewiþ AA.² techen AA.³ omitted X.⁴ in X.⁵⁻⁵ her AA.⁶ expositours X.⁷⁻⁷ omitted AA.⁸ AA. inserts world.⁹ studien AA.¹⁰ omitted X.

Capitulum 5^m.

Lawsuits for
tithes.

Summon men
and take their
goods,
or curse them,

and then put
them in prison.

Contrary to
Christ's example.

Luke ix. 55.
1 Peter iii. 9.
Rom. xii. 21.

Curates do not
love their sub-
jects' souls when
they will give
them to the devil
for fourpence.

The people
should insist as
much on curates
doing their work.

þe fyueþe defaute; þat þei haunten¹ strif & plee & gendren enuye & hate among lewed men for tyþes, whanne þei don not here office aȝenward; for now þei leuen prechyng of þe gospel & crien faste aftir tyþes, & somonen men to chapitre & bi fors taken here goodis, & ellis cursen hem seuene fote aboue þe erþe & seuene foot wiþ-inne þe herþe & seuene fote on eche side; & afterward drawen men to prison, as þei weren kyngis & emperours of mennus bodies & catel, & forȝeten clenly þe mekenesse & þe pacience of crist & his apostlis, hou þei curseden not for tyþes whanne men wolden neiþer ȝeue hem mete ne drynk ne herbwre. But crist blamyd his apostlis whanne þei wolden axe suche vengauce, as þe gospel of seynt luk techeth, & seynt petir bidiþ blisse oþere men, ȝe here enemis, & not haue wille to curse, & poul techeth þat we schulden not do euele for euyl, But ouer come an euyl dede bi good doynge aȝen. Lord, hou louen þes curatis here sugetis soulis þat wolen for foure pens bitake hem bodi & soule to þe fend, ȝe, whanne þei may not paie for verray² pouert, & whanne þei don not here gostly office; & þanne þe curatis ben more cursed of god for wiþdrawynge of techynge in word, in³ dede, in good ensaample þanne þe sugetis wiþdrawynge tiþes & offryngis whanne þei don wel here gostly office. & wold god þat⁴ þe peple wolde axe as faste of þe curatis gostly office, þat þei ben more holden to paie, as þe curatis axen dymes & offryngis, & þe curat loueth more his owene worldly good þan his sugetis soule⁵ þat wole brynge his parischen out of cherite & pacience & coste ten mark or twenti for a cause of þre pens or foure.

Capitulum 6^m.

Curates set an ex-
ample of world-
liness to their
flock.

þe sixte defaute; þat þei techen here parischens bi here dedis and lif; þat is a bok to here sugetis, to loue & seke

¹ AA inserts is.

² omitted X.

³ & X.

⁴ omitted AA.

⁵ X inserts &.

worldly glorie & to reckon nouȝt¹ of heuenely þingis;
 for þei maken hem self bisy niȝt & day to geten worldely
 avaunsementis & here owene worschipe & dignyte in þis
 world and² pleden & st[r]yuen þerfore, & helden³ it grete
 riȝtwisnesse to holden forþ & meyntene a poynt of worldly They strive for
worldly privi-
leges,
 priuylegie & dignyte; but aboute gostly dignite & hiȝe degre
 of heuenly blisse þei wolen not st[r]yue aȝenst gostly
 ennemys; for þei stryuen not who schal be most meke & but not who shall
follow Christ
most.
 most wilful pore & most bisi in opyn prechyng & priuey
 counseilyng hou men schal conquere heuene, as dide crist
 & his apostlis, but resten as mold-warpis in wrotyng of They are like
moles,
 worldly worschipe & erþely goodis, as þouȝ þere were no lif
 but only in þis wrecchid world; & þus where þei schulden
 lede here parischenys to heuene bi trewe techyng & holy
 ensauple & gret desir of heuenely þynges, þei leden hem to lead their parish-
ioners hell-ward.
 helle ward bi cursede ensauple of pride, coueitise & euyll
 techyng *to sette here lykyng endeles in ioie & worschipe of *[p. 126 MS.]
 þis wrecchid world.

Capitulum 7^m.

þe seuenþe errour; þat þei techen synful men to bie helle
 ful dere & not to come to heuene þat is profred hem for
 litel cost; for þei techen cristen men to sufre moche cold, They teach Chris-
tian men to war,
 hungur & þrist & moche wakyng & dispisyng & betyng for
 to gete worldly honour & a litel drit bi fals werryng out of
 charite; & ȝif þei bryngen hem moche gold þei assoilen hem
 liȝtly & maken hem siker bi here preieris & graunten hem
 goddis blissyng, but þei techen not hou here parischenys instead of how to
live in charity.
 schulden dispose hem to resceyue ȝiftis of þe holy gost &
 kepe condicions of charite, doynge trewþe & good conscience
 to eche man boþe pore & riche; & ȝif þei ben pore bi aduen-
 ture of þe world or wilfully bi drede of synne, þei dispisen Despise the poor,
 hem & setten hem at nouȝt and seyn þei ben cursed for þei
 han not moche muk; & ȝif þei han mochel worldly catel and flatter the
rich.

¹ omitted X.² in X.³ horden X.

geten wiþ false oþis, false weiȝtis, & oþere disceitis, þei preisen hem & b[l]issen hem & seyn god is wiþ hem ¹ & blisseþ hem.¹

Capitulum 8^m.

They shut up
the kingdom of
heaven against
men.

Matt. xxiii. 13.

They will not
teach holy writ,
nor let others
teach it.

They make the
people follow
their statutes,
and lead them
to hell.

þe eiȝte defaute; þei shitten þe kyngdom of heuene bi-
fore men, & neiþer gon in hem self ne suffren oþere men
to entren; for þei shitten holy writt, as þe gospel & com-
aundementis & condic[i]ounes of charite þat ben clepid þe
kyngdom of heuene, bi here false newe lawis & euyl glosynge
& euyl techynge; for neiþer þei wolen lerne hem self ne
techen holy writt, ne suffre oþere men to don it leste here
owene synne & ypocrisie be knowen & here lustful lif wiþ-
drawen. & þus þei closen cristis lif & his apostlis fro þe
comune peple bi keies of anticristis iuridiccion & censures,
& maken hem not so hardy to seye a treuþe of holi writt
aȝenst here cursed lif, for þat schal be holden detraccion &
enuye & aȝenst charite; & þerfore þei make þe peple to sue
here techynge & here statutis & customes & to leue goddis
techynge, & herbi leden hem blyndly in-to helle; & þus
closen þe kyngdom of heuene fro hem & leden hem to helle bi
here blynde ypocrisie & coueityse, as crist seiþ hym self.²

Capitulum 9^m.

They waste poor
men's goods in
pompe and luxury,

without thinking
of the labour by
which they were
earned.

*[p. 127 MS.]

þe ney[n]þe errour; þat þei wasten pore mennus goode in
ryche pellure & costly cloþis & worldly aray, as festis of
ryche men & glotonye & dronkenesse & lecherie sumtymes,
for þei passen grete men in here gaye pellure & precious
cloþis & wast festis & tatrid squeyeres & oþere meyne, þat
semen raþere turmentours þan cristene men; & he þat
wast³ most of pore mennus liflode is holden most worþi
& most noble man of holy chirche. litel þenke þei hou
sore pore men traueilen & spenden here flesch * & blood
aboute þe goddis þat þei wasten so nedeles; & hou seynt

¹⁻¹ omitted AA.

² omitted X.

³ wastep AA.

bernard crieth: what euere þing curatis holden of þe auterage Bernard.
 ouer a sympule liflode & cloþinge it nys not here but oþere
 mennus, & it is þefte & raueyne & sacrilegie; & hou euyl it
 is to suffre pore men perische for hungire & þriste & cold, &
 here curatis han fatte hors with gaye sadlis & bridelis. hou Their fat horses
 resonable is þis poynt þat þe procuratour of pore men schal and gay saddles.
 haue so riche pelure & esy fare of body, boþ of mete & drynk Poor men's proc-
 & reste, & pore men whos þes goddis ben schullen haue so tors better off
 moche peyne & payn defaute. than their prin-
 cipals.

Capitulum 10^m.

þe tenþe defaute; þat þei haunten lordis courtis & ben They hang about
 occupied in worldly office & don not here cure to here lords' courts and
 parischenys, & ȝit þei taken mo worldly goodis þerfore þan busy themselves
 crist & his apostlis. And certis þis is gret traitere, for what with secular
 office.
 man druste vndertake to kepe men biseged in a feble castel
 wiþ many stronge enemys, & þanne fle in-to an hogherdis
 office & lete enemys take þis castel & distroie it?¹ were not
 þis opyn treson, and þis kepere guilty of þe castel lesynge This is treason
 & alle men þer-inne? So it is of þes curatis & cristene to God.
 soulis of whiche þei taken cure, þat ben bisegid wiþ² fendis,
 whanne þei leuen hem vnkept & bisien hem in worldly office
 & lordis courtis. whi ben not þes lordis þat þus holden The lords who
 curatis in here courtis & worldly offices traitours to god employ them are
 traitors too.
 almyȝtty, siþ þei drawen away his chef knyttis fro here
 gostly bataile whanne & where þei weren most nedful. for
 þis seruyce þat lordis han of curatis abouten worldly office
 cristene soulis ben vntauȝt, & woluyes of helle stranglen hem
 & encombren hem in endles dispeir.

Capitulum 11^m.

þe eleuenþe errour; þat þei chargen more wrongful Care more for
 maundementis of synful men þan þe most riȝtful comaunde- men's commands
 mentis of god; for ȝif þe pope or bischop sende a letter than for God's.

¹ omitted X.² bi AA.

They welcome a for to resceyue a pardoner to disceyue þe peple bi
 cheating par-
 doner with the graunt of¹ many þousand þeer to pardon, he schal be sped
 pope's letter, algatis; but ȝif² þer come ony trewe man to preche frely &
 but forbid a true preacher; trewely þe gospel, he schal be lettid for wrongful comaunde-
 ment of a synful man. & þus þei dreden more synful men
 þan god almyȝtty, siþ þei putten goddis comaundement & his
 riȝtful wille bihynde & putten a synful mannus wille & wrong
 comaundement bifore. & þus for here owene worldly profit
 & bodely ayse þei stoppen here parischenys fro herynge of
 thus they stop
 their people from
 hearing God's
 law. goddis lawe, þat is fode of soule, & leden hem blyndly to
 helle; & þes ben euele fadris þat þus cruelly enfamynen here
 sugetis soulis & dryuen hem to dampnacion for loue of
 worldly muk or bodily ayse, or for drede of wrecchid
 anticristis þat ben goddis traitours & his peplis.

Capitulum 12^m.

They despise
 preaching,
 *[p. 128 MS.] þe twelþe errour; þat þei dispisen þe principal office
 comaundid of *god to curatis, & bisen hem aboute nouelries
 maad of synful men; for comunly þei kunnen not preche
 but learn men's
 traditions. þe gospel, & þei wolen lerne bisily mennus tradicions for
 worldly wynnynge, but not þe gospel þat crist god & man
 tauȝte & comaundid curatis to techen þat to lif & deþ; &
 certis as þei louen to studie, kepe & teche þe word³ of synful
 men bifore the word of god, so þei louen synful men or pride
 or worldly drit þat comeþ of mennus lawe more þan almyȝtty
 god & þe blisse of heuene; & certis herfore þei ben traitours
 of god & cheunteynes in þe fendis hoost to lede men in-
 to helle.

Capitulum 13^m.

They excommu-
 nicate more for
 money than for
 sin. þe þrittene errour; þei cursen here gostly children more
 for loue of worldly catel þan for brekyng of goddis hestis.
 A man may break
 God's law and not
 be summoned. For þouȝ a man breke opynly þe hestis of god, lyuyng in

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ world X.

pride, in false swerynge,¹ in opyn brekyng of þe holy day,
he schal not be sompned ne ponysched ne cursed bi hem.

But ȝif a man be bihynde of tiþes & oþere offryngis & cust[u]mes maad of synful men, he schal be sompned,
ponyschid & cursed, ȝe þouȝ he may not lyue out of oþere
mennus dette & fynde his wif & his children bi goddis
comaundement; & þus þei seken more þere² owene worschipe
& wynnyng þan þe worschipe of god & sauynge of cristene
soulis; & þus þei worschipe false goddis for here false
coueitise. wonder it is þat þes curatis cursen so sore for here
owene cause where þei schulden be pacient as crist was³ and
hise apostlis³; & so litel reken of dispit don to god where
þei schulden taken al resonable vengauce.⁴

but if he is behind
in his dues he
will be summoned
and cursed,
though he can-
not afford to pay.

Capitulum 14^m.

þe fourtenþe; þei taken here worldly myrþe, haukyng & huntynge & oþere vanytes doynge, & suffren woluyes of helle
stranglen mennus soulis bi many cursed synnes. þei schulden
drawe men fro worldly vanytes & techen hem þe perilis of þis
lif & to þenke on here deþ day, & be myrrouir to hem to
morne for here synnes & oþere mennus & for longe tariynge
of heueneley blisse, & laste in holy preieris & trewe techynge
of þe gospel and aspiynge þe fendis cautelis, & warne
cristene men of hem. But now þe more þat a curat' haþ of
pore mennys goodis, þe more comunly he wastiþ in costly
fedyng of houndis & haukis, & suffre pore men haue grete
defaute of mete & drynk & cloiþ; but hou schullen þei
answere to crist at þe dredful day of dom, þat þus holden pore
mennus lifode fro hem & wasten it in such worldly vanyte?
certis þei schullen be dampnyd for mansleeris boþe of body &
soule, & for sleeris of crist wiþ þe wickid iewis þat nayleden
him on þe cros.

They waste
money in hawk-
ing and hunting.

They will be
damned as
murderers.

¹ werynge X. ² here AA. ³⁻³ omitted X.

⁴ In AA this last clause runs "and where þat þei shulden take suche
unresonable vengauce."

Capitulum 15^m.

They haunt
taverns,

*[p. 129 MS.]

play at tables,
chess and hazard;

get drunk.

He that goes
most to taverns
is most praised
for liberality.

þe feftenþe; þat þei haunten tauernes out of mesure & stiren lewid men to dronkenesse, ydelnesse & *cursed* swerynge and *chydyng & fiȝttinge; for þei wolen not traueilen faste in here gostly office *after* crist & his apostlis, ¹ þat ful bisili haȝ tauȝt hem ¹; þerfore þei fallen to nyse pleies, at tables, chees & hasard, & beten þe stretis, & sitten at þe tauerne til þei han lost here witt, & þan chiden & stryuen & fiȝten sumtyme, & sumtyme neiþer han eiȝe ne tonge ne hond ne foot to helpe hem self for dronkenesse, & be þis ensauple þe lewed peple weneþ þat dronkenesse ² is no synne; but he þat wastiþ most pore mennys goodis at tauernes, makynge hym self & oþere men dronken, is most preised of nobleie & curtesie & goodnesse & largenesse & worþinesse ³ of þe world. ³ lord, hou wel ben þes dronken curatis disposid to serue god & mynystre sacramentis, & namely of confession *in* tyme of deþ, to here sugetis.

Capitulum 16^m.

Will not commu-
nicate those who
have not paid
tithes,

or have not con-
tributed to the
crusade.

Spencer's crusade
in Flanders.

þe sixtenþe; þei wolen not ȝeue þe sacramentis of þe auter, þat is cristis body, to here paryschenys, but ȝif þei paied here tiȝes & offryngis, & but ȝif þei han paied money to a worldly prest to slee cristene men. & ȝif men douten of þis, late hem enquere þe soþe hou it was whanne þe bischop of norwich went *in-to* flaundris, & killed hem bi many þousandis & made hem oure enemys. litel reken þes curatis in what deuocion & charite here parischenys resceyuen cristis body, whanne þei openly taken hem vp fro goddis ⁴ bord, & stiren hem to vnpacience & enuye & hate for a litel muk þat þei chalengen to hem self.

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

² added by a later hand in X.

³⁻³ These words, omitted in X, are added as a correction in AA.

⁴ omitted AA.

Capitulum 17^m.

þe seuentenþe; þe ben blynde lederis ledynge þe blynde¹ peple to synne bi here euył ensaumpel & fals disceit in techynge, & at þe laste in-to helle; for þouȝ þei kunnen not o poynt of þe gospel ne whiten what þei reden, ȝit þei wolen take a fat benefice wiþ cure of mannus soule; & neiþer kunnen reule here owene soule ne oþere mennys, ne wolen spedly lerne ne suffre oþere men to teche here parischenys trewly & frely þe gospel & goddis hestis. And ȝit þei crien fast þat þe peple schal doo after hem, whenne þei knowe not þe riȝtte weie to heuene; & so þei leden þe symple peple in errour & synne whanne þe peple wenep for² to do wel, & maken þe peple to demen good euył & euył good, & to wende þe weie to helle whanne þei wenen to goo to heuene.

They will take benefices without knowing the gospel,

and stop other men from preaching.

Capitulum 18^m.

þe eiȝtenþ; þei ben fals prophetis, techinge fals cronyclis & fablis to colour here worldly lif þerby, & leuen þe trewe gospel of ihū crist; for þei louen welle to telle hou þis seynt³ or þis³ lyuede in gay & costy cloþis & worldly aray,⁴ & ȝit is a grete seynt.⁴ But þei leuen to teche þe grete penaunce & sorow þat þei diden after ward, for which þei⁵ pleseden god & not for here worldly lif, & þus þei make þe peple to⁶ wene þat worldly lif of prestis & veyn cost of hem & waste of pore mennus goodis plesip god & is⁷ vertuous lif, aȝenst cristis lif & his techynge & his apostlis also; & þei techen also hou for curs of a synful man þe creature of god, as a loof, þat trespasid not, was mowlid & fordon, & make þe peple bileue *þat þat a goode cristene man kepyng welle goddis hestis schal be dampnyd for a wrongful curs of a worldly prest, þat in caas is a dampnyd fend, & þus þei bryngen þe

They tell chronicles and fables when they preach, libelling the saints.

They relate false miracles.

*[p. 130 MS.]

They teach that a good man may be damned by excommunication.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³⁻³ omitted AA.

⁴⁻⁴ X reads & ȝit it is a grete synne.

⁵ cut away from margin in X.

⁶ omitted X.

⁷ his X.

peple out of¹ cristene feiþ bi here false cronyclis & ²here sotele² fablis. For crist seiþ þat men schullen be blissed of god whanne men schullen curse hem & pursue hem & seie alle euyll aȝenst hem falsly for þe loue of crist & his trewþe. And þe peple bileueþ þe contrarie of þis techynge of crist bi þis fablis & seyntis dedis, or lesyngis putt on seyntis.

Capitulum 19^m.

They go shares
with pardoners,
who deceive the
people

with stolen bulls
and false relics;

but they bring
the law to bear
against an honest
priest.

The pardoner
gets money out
of poor people,

and sends it
abroad.

The people are
made bold to re-
main in sin.

þe neyntenþe; þei assenten to pardoners disceyuyng þe peple in feiþ & charite & worldly goodis for to haue part of here gederynge, & letten prestis to preche þe gospel for drede laste here synne & ypocrisie be knowen & stoppid; for whanne þere comeþ a pardoner wiþ stollen bullis & false relekis, grauntynge mo ȝeris of pardon þan comen bifore domes day for ȝeuyng of worldly catel to riche placis where is no nede, he schal be sped & resceyued of curatis for to haue part of þat he getiþ; but a preste þat wole telle þe trewþe to alle men wiþ-outen glosynge & frely wiþ-outen beggyng of þe pore peple, he schal be lettid bi sotil cauyllacions of mannus lawe, for drede last he touche þe sore of here conscience & cursed lif. & þis pardoner schalle telle of more power þan euere crist grauntid to petir or poul or any apostle, to drawe þe almes fro pore bedrede neiȝeboris þat ben knowen feble & pore, & to gete it to hem self & wasten it ³ful synfulli³ in ydelnesse & glotonye & lecherie, & senden gold out of oure lond to riche lordis & housis where is no nede & make oure lond pore by many sotle⁴ weies; & here bi þe peple is more bold to ⁵lien stille⁵ in her⁶ synne, & wenep not to haue as myche þank & reward of crist for to do ⁷here almes to pore feble men, as crist biddiþ in þe gospel, as whanne þei don here almes to riche housis aftir graunt of synful foolis; & this is opyn error aȝenst cristene feiþ.

¹ omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

⁷ omitted AA.

²⁻² omitted X.

⁵⁻⁵ lyue X.

³⁻³ omitted X.

⁶ omitted X.

Capitulum 20^m.

þe twentiþe; þat a prest of good lif & deuout & trewe
 prechour of goddis lawe is dispised, hatid & pursued of They hate good
priests and love
bad ones;
 worldly curatis, & a fals prest of worldly lif & aray þat
 suffren men wexe roten in here cursed synne is louyd, preised
 & cherischid among ¹such synful folis; ¹ for þei seyn þat such a
 good prest is ²an ydiot and ²an ypocrite & slaundriþ men of they call a good
priest a hypocrite
and slanderer.
 holy chirche & lettiþ men to do here deuocion to holy chirche;
 & bi here dom a prest þat liueþ comyn worldly lif & stiriþ
 no men to wrap bi ³reprouynge hem of here opyn synnes
 doþ moche worschipe to holy chirche & encesceþ mennus
 deuocion; & þus for here coueitise & pride trewe prestis ben
 put abak & dispised, & ydel prestis & worldly be preised &
 cherischid, & þis makith many men slowe in good lif &
 prechyng and manye *to loue worldly lif & ydelnesse ⁴ & *[p. 131 MS.]
 vanyte. ⁴

Capitulum 21^m.

þe on and twenteþe; þei hiden & meyntenen her synnes & Vicious curates
hide their sins
by taking office
with lords,
 opere mennus bi proteccion & helpe of lordis, þat here
 souereyns may not correcte hem ne compelle hem to resi-
 dence. for whanne þer is ⁵a vicious curat of lecherie or of ⁶
 vnkunynge he wole haue lettris of kyng & lordis to dwelle and get letters
from king or
lords,
 in here courtis in worldly offices & be absent fro his cure;
 þat his souereyn schal not dore correcte him for drede of his so that their
superiors dare
not punish them.
 temperaltees & wrappe of lordis; & þus lordis ben made
 schildis of synne for a litel money or worldly seruyce of
 wickid curatis, þat rihtwisnesse may not forþ ⁷in her vertuose
 lyuynge. ⁷

Capitulum 22^m.

þe two & twen[ti]þe; þat many of hem vnder colour of
 lernynge of þe gospel lerne statutis maade of synful men & They learn men's
statutes instead
of the gospel.

¹⁻¹ hem X.²⁻² omitted X.³ þe X.⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.⁵ his X.⁶ omitted X.⁷⁻⁷ omitted X.

worldly prestis, & lyuen in ydelnesse, glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie, & ben euere þe lengere þe more vnable. For When beneficed, whanne þei han grete benefices, perauenture by symonye, & connen not teche here sugetis to saue here soulis, & doren not holden here lemmannys at home for clamour of men, þei gon to scole & faren wel of mete & drenk & reste & studyen wiþ þe cuppe & ¹ strumpatis; where goode prestis traueilen faste to lerne goddis lawe, þei gon for þe manere to cyuyle or canon, & don litel good þer at ² as trewe men þinken ²; & þus þei wasten pore mennus liflode in hordom & glotonye, & lernen lorelschipe, & to curse cristene men for here goodis, & ʒeuen to here sugettis ensauple of pride & coueitise & glotonye & lecherie & ydelnesse.

and afraid to keep their lemans at home, they go to the university and study with the cup and strumpets,

and learn rascality.

Capitulum 23.³

The more knowing of them use their knowledge in maintaining sin.

If one can crack a little Latin in Civil or Canon Law, he is held wise,

though he can hardly read a verse in his Psalter.

þe þre & twentiþe; þe more kunnyng men of hem myspenden here witt & kunnyng in meynテナunce of synne, as of pride & coueitise of clerkis & oppressyng of pore parischenys bi wrong customes for drede of plee & censuris, & meynтенyng false causis in constories for gold; & taken pensions of lecherous men & wommen for ⁴ to helpe hem to baþe hem in here synne as swyn in þe fen. & herby he þat can cracke a litil latyn in constories of heþene mennus lawe & worldly prestis lawe & can helpe to anoie a pore man bi knackis or chapitris, is holden a noble clerk & redy & wys, þouþ he kunne not rede wel a vers in his sauter ne vnderstonden a comune auctorite of holy writt; & siche knackeris ben as proude of here veyn kunnyng as lucifer, & setten not bi pore mennus kunnyng in goddis lawe, but dispisen hem & goddis lawe as þouþ it were no lawe, & comenden here owene lawe & hem self more þan holy writt & ihū crist & his apostlis ⁵ þat so blessingly lyueden ⁵; & þis makþ synne & falsnesse to ⁶ regne, & feiþ & treuþe & charite be defoulid & quenched.

¹ AA inserts here vicious.

²⁻² omitted X.

³ In X the heading of this chapter is omitted.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵⁻⁵ omitted X.

⁶ omitted X.

*Capitulum 24.*¹

þe foure & twentiþe; þat þei maken þe clene lawe of god vnder þe feet of anticrist & his clerkis, & treuþe of þe gospel be dampnyd for errour & ignoraunce of worldly clerkis; for þes worldly clerkis þat lyuen in glotonye & studien to drynke heiþe wyne² * & base fisik wiþ strumpetis presumen bi here pride to be domes men of sotil & heiþe mysterijs³ & priue articlis of holy writt, & blyndly dampnen treuþes of cristis gospel, for þei ben aʒenst here worldly lif & fleschly lustis; & þes blynde bosardis wolen dampnen trewe men þat techen trewely & frely holy writt aʒenst here synnes to be heretikis, For no man schulde here goddis lawe tauwʒt bi suche trewe men, & þei hem self wole preche here owne tradicions & not þe gospel; & so holy writt schal be owtlawid or oppressid bi wronge statutis of synful mennys makynge; but certis alle cristene men schal crie out on þes deuelis blasphemyes & cursed heresies of anticrist & his worldly fonned clerkis.

They put the law of God under the feet of Antichrist

Worldly clerks decide on points of religion, * [p. 132 MS.]

and condemn the truth because it is against them.

They will not let others preach, and themselves preach only their traditions.

Capitulum 25^{m.4}

þe fyue & twentiþe errour; þei chesen newe lawis maad of synful men & worldly & coueytise prestis & clerkis to reule þe peple bi hem as most nedful & best lawis, & forsaken þe perfiteste lawe of þe gospel & pistlis of crist & his apostlis, as not perfit ne fully ynouʒ ne trewe; for now heþene mennus lawis and worldly clerkis statutis ben red in vnyuersitees, & curatis lernen hem faste wiþ grete desir, studie & cost, but þe⁵ lawe of god is litel studied, litel costid þer aboute, & lesse kept & tauʒt; but þe olde testament for wynnyng of tyþes & offryngis is sumwhat practised; & þe gospel þat techeþ⁶ cristis mekenesse & wilful pouert & bisi traueileʒ in prechyng to saue cristene soulis, for it constreyneþ prestis to þis holy lif, is litel loued & studied & tauʒt but rapere dispised & hyndrid & maade fals bi⁷ speche of anticristis clerkis. & in þis þei

They choose laws made of men, and neglect the laws of Christ.

Civil and Canon Law are read in the Universities,

but not the Bible, save the Old Testament in support of tithes.

¹ 23 X.² with wyues AA.³ mynysters X.⁴ 24 X.⁵ omitted X.⁶ techid X.⁷ AA inserts þe uiciouse.

Thus they say
that Christ gave
an insufficient
law.

Christians should
reject these laws
when not founded
on the gospel.

Gal. i. 8.

seynt þat crist is vnwyttý, out of charite & treuþe, siþ he ʒaf
not a sufficient lawe & þe beste for reuelynge of his peple, &
þat worldly fonned clerkis of sathanas & anticrist ben wittiére,
trewere & in more charite þan ihū crist, siþ here lawes ben
betre & more nedful for cristene men þan þo¹ lawis þat crist
himsilf² made. But on this blasphemye heresie schullen alle
cristene men crien out & take fully þe gospel to here reule³ &
helpe,³ & not sette bi þes newe lawis⁴ maad of synful wrecchis⁴
but in also moche as þei ben groundid in holy writt expresly
or good reson & trewe conscience & charite; for as god bi
seynt poul techiþ, who euere techeth oþere lawes he is cursed
of god; ʒe, þouȝ he were an angil of heuene; for god may
not make oþere lawis aȝenst his gospel & charite, whi schulde
anticrist & his clerkis?

Capitulum 26^{m.5}

They bid their
subjects not
judge the clergy
either for works
or words.

Christ bade men
judge him.

John vii. 24.

John x. 38.

*[p. 133 MS.]

John xviii. 23.

1 Cor. x. 15.

þe sixe and twentiþe; þei magnifyen hem self abouen crist
god & man; for þei comaunden here sugetis þat þei owen not
to iuge clerkis, ne here opyn werkis ne here techynge, But do
aftir here techynge, be it trewe be it fals. But oure lord ihū
crist comaundid his enemys to deme of hym a riȝtful dom &
not aftir þe face. Also oure lord ihū bad his enemys bileue
to his werkis þouȝ þei wolden not bileue to him, & bad þat
*men schulden not bileue to hym ʒif he dide not þe werkis of
his fadir. ¶ Also crist bad to his enemys þat þei⁶ schulde bere
witnessse of euyl ʒif he had spoken euyle, & seynt poul biddiþ
his hereris deme þat þat⁷ he seide, where þes worldly foolis
wolen be anticristis more maistris þan crist god & man, Siþ
þei wolen not be demyd & amendid bi cristis⁸ peple vnder
hem of here opyn werkis aȝenst goddis hestis ne of here fals
lesyngis þat þei techen in stede of cristis gospel. certis a
more blasphemye ground castid neuere sathanas to norische
synne of clerkis & fals disceit in techynge, & to lede blyndly
cristene soulis to helle.

¹ þe X.

² omitted X.

³⁻³ omitted X.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

⁵ 25 X.

⁶ he X.

⁷ omitted X.

⁸ cristene AA.

*Capitulum 27.*¹

þe seuene and twentiþe; þei ben anticristis lettynge cristene men to kunne here bileue & speken of holy writt; for þei crien opynly þat seculer men schullen not entirmeten hem of þe gospel to rede it in heir² modir tonge, but heere³ her gostly fadris preche & do after hem in alle þingis; but þis is expressly azenst goddis techynge. For god comaundiþ generally to eche lewid man þat he schal haue goddis hestis bi-fore hym & teche hem to his children⁴ & also to hise meyne,⁴ & þe wise man biddiþ euery cristene man þat alle his tellynge be in þe hestis of god altherhiȝest,⁵ & þat he haue euere more in mynde þe comaundementis of god. And seynt petir biddiþ cristene men be redi to ȝeue reson of oure feiþ & ope to teche eche man þat axit it, & god comaundid his prestis to preche þe gospel to eche man, & þe skille is for alle men schulden kunne it and reule here lif þer aftir. lord, whi schulde worldly prestis forbede seculer men to speke of þe gospel & goddis hestis, siþ god ȝeueþ hem gret witt of kynde & gret desir to knowen god & louen him. for þe more goodnesse þat þei knowen of god þe more þei schullen loue god. where worldly prestis schullen for here owene vnkunnyngnesse & sleuþe & ydelnesse & pride⁶ stoppe cristene men to knowe god & serue hym vp þe ȝiftis þat god ȝeueþ hym. heȝere scole of anticrist to distroie cristene mennys bileue & charite herde neuere creature fro makynge of þe world þan is þis blasphemye heresie, þat lewid men schulden not entirmeten hem of þe gospel.

They forbid secular men to read the gospel in their mother tongue.

God bids every man to keep his commandments before him. Deut. vi. 6.

Ecclus. vi. 37.

1 Peter iii. 15.

The more men know God the more they will love him.

Capitulum 28^{m.7}

þe eiȝte & twentiþe; þei disceyuen cristene men in doynge of verray penaunce; for þei doren not telle þe soþe hou nedis þei mosten forsake alle falsnesse in craftis, in opis, & alle synne vp here kunnyng & power, & for no good in erþe wityngly & wilfully do azenst goddis hestis, neiþer for lucre ne drede ne bodily deþ, & ellis it is not verrey *contricion, &

They deceive men as to penance, for they dare not insist upon amendment as essential to contrition,

*[p. 134 MS.]

¹ 26 X.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

⁵ alyerhiȝest X.

⁶ X inserts &.

⁷ 27 X.

and to absolu-
tion;

but they speak
much of tithes
and offerings.

Thus they lead
people to trust to
priest's absolu-
tion without true
penance;

and say that a
man who is truly
contrite cannot
be saved without
shrift.

ellis god wole not asoile hem for no confession of moueþ, ne for assoilynge of prestis, ne bullis of pardon, ne lettris of fraternyte, ne massis, ne preieris of ony creatur ¹ in erþe or in ² þe blis of ² heuene; but þei speken mochil of tiþes & offryngis in þis confession, & litel of restitucion & doynge of almes to pore bedrede ³ men, But of masse pens & chirche gaynesse. & herby þe peple is brouȝt out of bileue, tristynge þat here synne is forȝoue for here prestis assoilynge, þouȝ þei don not verrey penaunce as god techeth hym self. And herby þei magnyfien more here owene assoilynge þan assoilynge of god for verrey contricion, whanne god him self seiþ ⁴ in what kynne hour a synnere haþ inwardly ⁵ sorowe for his synnys he schal be saue, þei wolen make þis word ⁶ fals, seyng þat he schal not be saf be he neuere so contrit wiþouten schrifte of mouþ maad to hem, ⁷ þat ben in cas þe fendis procuratours to disceyuen men in here soulis helþe for here vnkunnyng & pride & coueitise.

Capitulum 29^{m.8}

They rob people
by their excom-
munications,

and make them
uphold wrong
customs.

þe neyne & twentiþe; þei robben cristene peple of goodis of fortune, of goodis of kynde & goodis of grace bi feyned censuris of here owen lawis; for þei cursen so dispitusly ȝif men paie not monye at here lykyng, þat þei chalengen bi synful mannus lawis & newe customes & deuociouns & not of goddis lawe, þat no man dar wiþ-seie hem in here wrong for drede of curs, prisonynge, & lesyngis of pacience & charite; & herbi þei maken cristene men as bestis holde forþ here wrong customes & mannus lawe, & not knowe goddis lawe & þe riȝtte weie to heuene. certis it were lasse cruelte to suspende men fro bodily mete & drynk & make hem dede bodily þan to suspende hem fro herynge of þe gospel & goddis hestis, þat is lif of þe soule. lord, hou cursed anticristis ben þes worldly prelatis & curatis þat cursen trewe men for prechyng & herynge of holy writt.

¹ curvature X.

⁴ omitted X.

⁷ synful men AA.

²⁻² omitted X.

⁵ in worldly X.

⁸ 28 X.

³ bedere X.

⁶ lord AA.

Capitulum 30^m.

þe þrittiþe; þei taken not dymes & offryngis bi forme of þe olde testament & partyn hem in comyn to alle prestis & mynystres nedful in þe chirche, ne bi forme of þe gospel takynge a symple liflode þouen of free deuocion of þe peple wiþ-uten constreynynge & cursynge, as crist & his apostlis diden. but bi þe newe lawe of synful men o prest chalengiþ him self alle tiþes of a gret contre bi worldly plee & newe censures; & neiþer lyueþ as a good prest, ne techiþ as a curat, ne deliþ þe residue to pore men as a good cristene man. They do not take tithes according to the Old Testament, nor ask a simple living according to the New Testament; but one priest takes all the tithes of a large district.

*But wastiþ hem in pompe & glotonye & oþere¹ synnes, & lettiþ trewe prestis to do þe office enyoyned to hem bi god almyȝtty. certis it semeþ þat þes ben not prestis after goddis lawe but after synful mennus ordynaunce, to be maistris of god & lordis of cristene peple, siþ þei holden neuer neiþer lawe of god in² dymes takynge, & taken hem bi vyolence & stronge curses aȝenst mennus goode wille, & maken þe peple out of pacience & charite bi here pledynge, & don not wel here gostly office. *[p. 135 MS.]

Capitulum 31^m.

þe on & þrittiþe; þat at ensauple of serpentis þei seruen bisily to lordis in seculer offices for nouȝt as who seiþ, and in þe ende poisonen þe lordis wiþ venym of symonye þat is worse þan ony bodily poison. & whanne þei han a benefice wiþ cure of mennus soule þei dwellen stille in worldly office of lordis, & spenden pore mennus liflode in riot & wombe ioie, & suffren cristene men perische in body & soule for defaute of techynge & werkis of mercy. how cursed serpentis ben þis weiward curatis þat þus enuenymyn hem self, þe lordis & comunes wiþ venym of symonye, of pride & glotonye & alle manere of synne. They serve lords for nothing to get a benefice when they have a benefice, they neglect their cure, and still take worldly office. They are serpents who spread the venom of simony.

¹ AA. inserts synful.² & X.

Capitulum 32^m.

They make lords
and commons
maintain bad
priests,

under pretence of
maintaining the
liberties of the
Church.

New service.

So Antichrist's
priests are
maintained.

þe two & þrittiþe; þei maken lordis & comunes bi blynd deuocion & ypocrisie to meyntenen worldly clerkis in pride, coueitise & ydelnesse & false techynge of anticristis errours vndir colour of fredom & worschipynge of holy chirche & goddis lawe. For þei crien faste þat lordis & comunes moten meyntenen goddis seruau^tis in his seruyce & þe lawis & þe¹ libertes of holy chirche, & maken newe seruyce likynge to worldly mennus eris & newe lawis & customes for here owene wynnyng & pride, & leuen þat seruyce & clene lawe þat god made to prestis for most profit on eche side. & þus whanne lordis & comyns wenen to meyntenen goddis prestis & his lawe, þei meyntenen anticristis prestis and² here lawis & wrong customes & pride & oþere synnes in-stede of mekenesse & oþere vertues, & magnifyenge of mennus lawis & dispisyng of goddis lawis.

Capitulum 33^m.

They teach that
if men maintain
worldly clerks,
they shall be re-
warded through
their prayers,

and if they try to
make priests live
holy life they will
be cursed, etc.

*[p. 136 MS.]

Apostrophe to
curates.

þe þre & þrittiþe; þei techen cristene men to blaspheme god & holden werre aʒenst hym; for þei techen cristene men to meyntenen mennys lawis & ordynaunces for betre & more nedful þan þe clene lawe of crist & his witty ordynaunce; & crien faste, ʒif cristene men meyntenen þe multitude of worldly clerkis in here newe lawis & customes & libertes þei schullen haue goddis blissyng & prosperite & pees & reste, bi so many deuout prestis seculer & religious preiynge, redynge & syngynge nyȝt & day; & ʒif þei wolden brynge prestis out of þis glorious lif & new song to mekenesse & gostly pouert & bisi traueile in lernynge & prechyng of þe gospel, as crist & his apostlis diden, þei schullen be cursed & haue werre & myschif, boþe in þis *world & þe toþer;³ & þis makeþ þe blynde peple to werre aʒenst god & his ordynaunce & pursuen his techeris as⁴ heretikis. ¶ O ʒe curatis, seeþ þes heresies &

¹ omitted AA.

² in X.

³ þat oþer AA.

⁴ AA inserts heþen.

blasphemyes & many moo suyng of þoure wickid lif & weiward techynge, & forsake hem for drede of helle, & turne to good lif & trewe techynge of þe gospel & ordynaunce of god, as crist & his apostlis diden, for reward of heuenely blisse, & in confessions & oþere spechis charge þe more brekenge of goddis hestis þan brekyng of foly bihestis of newe pylgrymagis & offryngis; & teche cristene men to turne suche fonnyd a-vowis in-to betre almes, as crist techiþ in þe gospel. Almyȝtty god brynge curatis in-to holy lif & trewe techynge after crist & his apostlis. Amen.

VIII.

THE ORDER OF PRIESTHOOD.

OF this tract I can only say that it may be by Wyclif. If so it must be one of the earliest of his English tracts, written before his order of poor priests had been fully organized. It may be taken to express that strong sense of the faults prevalent among the clergy which led him to institute his order of preachers.

The writer was certainly a zealous lover of his University, as may be seen from his complaint (Chapter XXIII.) that the clergy stir rich men to support chaplains and chantry priests rather than poor scholars.

Chapter XXII. deserves notice for its attack on priests who excite the people to war by processions and public prayers. (Cf. p. 170, l. 3.) Is this utterance due only to a personal horror of bloodshed, or does it point to the existence of a peace party?

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

- CHAP. I. Priests commit simony in using influence and bribes to be ordained.
- II. Priests sell their masses, and offer a share in the mass to those who pay them.
- III. Priests are so ignorant that they cannot read the service properly.
- IV. Priests live idle and luxurious lives, haunting taverns, etc.
- V. Priests neglect their duties and take secular office with lords.
- VI. Priests take money to say prayers and by evil life make their prayers vain.
- VII. Priests care chiefly for new song, which sets people dancing, but hides the words of Holy Writ.
- VIII. Priests care more to keep the Ordinal of Salisbury than God's commandments.
- IX. Priests take rash vows of chastity and do not keep them.
- X. Priests fear to reprove vice in their patrons.
- XI. Priests who preach falsely are Satans transformed etc.
- XII. Worldly priests seek their own gain more than the good of souls.

- CHAP. XIII. Priests carry on business as maltsters and cattle-dealers.
- XIV. They care more for forms of service than for following God's commands.
- XV. Covetousness of worldly priests.
- XVI. Too many men become priests, because the life is an easy one.
- XVII. The excuses priests make for sin.
- XVIII. Priests do not try to keep their patrons from sin.
- XIX. Many priests poison their masters' minds against true teachers.
- XX. Priests claim falsely the power of restricting and assigning the benefit of their prayers.
- XXI. They teach men to give money to friars instead of doing good to their poor neighbours.
- XXII. They excite the people to unjust wars.
- XXIII. They get rich men to waste their gifts on mass-priests and law-students.
- XXIV. They get men to found chantries for useless priests.
- XXV. They lead men to trust to their prayers more than to good life.
- XXVI. They persecute God's servants and slander his law.
- XXVII. Priests break God's law from fear of the bishops.
- XXVIII. They cease to obey God by preaching, etc., because the bishop suspends them.
- XXIX. Nobleness of priest's office and exhortation to priests and nobles.

þis is for þe ordre of presthod.

Capitulum primum.

For þe ordre of presthod is ordeyned of god boþe in þe
Faults of priests. olde lawe & þe newe, And many prestis kepen it ful euele,
 telle we summe errours of prestis to amende hem wiþ goddis
Simony. grace. First, comynly þei comen to here ordris by symonye
In taking orders for low motives. many weies, for þei ben more maad prestis for worldly honour
 & aisy lif & welfare of body þan for deuocion to lyue in
 clenness & holynesse & penaunce, & gret gostly traueile in
 preieris & studiynge & techynge of goddis lawe, & to suffre
 persecucion & sclandre & prisonyng þerfore; & so þei siller
 in manere þe spiritual lif of cristis¹ apostilis & disciplis for a
 litel drit & wombe ioie, & þis is cursed gostly symonye &
In using influence to get ordination even when unfit. heresie bifore god. & what lettris & preieris þei maken for
 to ben ordrid prestis whanne þei ben vnable boþe of lif &
 kunnyng men may knowen opynly, & þis is styngynge²
In payments to bishops' officers. heresie of symonye; & ȝit þei ȝeuen a gret raunson to
 bischopis officers for lettris & veyn customes or þei may be
 ordrid & do execucion of here office; & þouȝ prelatiſ & here
 officeris ben grettere heretikis for sillynge of þes ordris & þis
 extorcion doynge, neþeles þes prestis ne beþ not alle excused
 for þei consenten þer-to rapere þan þei wolen be harde
 examynynd & lettid of here ordris. sumtyme holy men &
 kunnyng is-scheweden³ to be prestis for heiȝenesse of þe
 ordre. But now ȝonge childre vnable boþe of lif & kunnyng
 presen faste to be prestis in name &⁴ not in dede, & aftirward
 wolen not bisien hem to lerne, But bete stretis vp & doun &
 synge & pleie as mynystrelis, & vse vanytees & ydelnesse.

Formerly holy men eschewed the priesthood from modesty. Mere children get themselves ordained and lead useless lives.

Capitulum 2^m.

Will not say mass except for money. Also þei lyuen comynly in symonye, sillynge here massis
 & þe sacrament of cristis body for worldly muk & wombe

¹ crist X. ² styngynge AA. ³ eschewen AA. ⁴ X inserts not in name &.

ioie; for comynly þei wolen sille here masse for annuel salarie,
 & ellis not dwellen wiþ a man but where þei may most
 wynne, & seyn more þe masse for loue of þe peny þan for
 deuocion or charite to criste & cristene soulis. *for be þe *[p. 137 MS.]
 masse seide in herynge of þe peple schortly & vndewoutly, and say it irreverently.
 litel sauour of holynesse schal men fynden wiþ hem, but
 nycete & pleye & goynge to þe tauerne & oþere vanytes. it
 semeþ resonable þat a goode prest haue resonable liflode to
 serue god of wilful almes of þe peple, & not bi lonyng &
 bedynge as who wold selle a worldly þing; for þe prest may The priest cannot make his master a sharer in his mass.
 not make his ¹ maister lord ne partyner of his masse, but only
 god for his goode lif & ² charite; but many prestis don þe
 masse more for money & bodily welfare þan for deuocion &
 worschipe of god, & wollen not don þe masse but for hope
 of worldly wynnyng; & certis alle þes sellen criste as iudas Those who say mass only for money are worse than Judas.
 dide, & worse, for he is nowe knowen for god & glorified in
 his manhede, & nowe haþ schewid mo benefices to mankynde
 þan he hadde do in iudas tymes, & alle þes condicions
 aggregen þis cursed sillynge of cristis body.

Capitulum 3^m.

Also þei slaundren & defoulen þe holy ordre of presthod
 bi worldly lif & ignoraunce ³ of holy writ ³; for sumtyme god Ignorance of priests. Hosea iv. 9.
 seide bi his prophete in reprof of worldly prestis þat þe prest
 is as þe peple. But nowe, as seynt bernard seiþ, prestis ben Bernard.
 more worldly & vicious þan þe comune peple, þat bi hem þe
 peple takiþ ensauple & boldnesse ⁴ in synne; & þei ben so
 vnkunnyng þat men scornen hem in seyng of here seruyce, Their reading is ridiculed.
 & ⁵ redynge of here pistil & gospel. but god seiþ to such a
 prest: þou hast caste a weie kunnyng of my lawe & I schal Hosea iv. 6.
 caste þe aweie þat þou be not sette in presthod to me. & ȝit
 ignoraunce of good lif & goddis hestis is werse þan ignoraunce
 of latyn or of ony oþer langage; þerfore prestis schulden don
 here bisynesse to lyue wel & vnderstonde & knowe goddis

¹ is X. ² in AA. ³⁻³ & holy X. ⁴ blodnesse X. ⁵ in X.

Mal. ii. 7. wille & teche it in word & dede, & be¹ myrrour of holynesse to þe peple, & goddis angelis, as god seiþ bi þe prophete.

Capitulum 4^m.

Prestis also sclaudren þe peple bi ensauple of ydelnesse & wauntounnesse; for comynly þei chouchen² in softe beddis whanne oþere men risen to here labour, & blabren out matyns & masse as hunteris wiþ-uten deuocion & contemplacion, & hien faste to mete richely & costly arayed of þe beste, & þan to slepe; & soone a-noon to tablis & chees & tauerne & betynge of pauement, & þan speken of lecherie, of deprouynge of goode men, þat wolen³ not sue here companye; & þanne comeþ dronkennesse, chidyng & fyttyng & many tymes mansleyng, & bi þes prestis & here wantownesse moche peple is brouȝt to lecherie, glotonye, ydelnesse & þefte.

Capitulum 5^m.

Priests take too much worldly business to win preferment— Also prestis occupien hem ouer moche in worldly occupations & seculer offices aȝenst holy writt for plesynge of lordis & hope of benefices; for comunly prestis ben stiwardis & clerkis of kechene & resceyuouris & rente gedereris & hunteris, & leuen here gostly office vndon, & han more as kitchen-clerks and rent collectors. & clerkis of kechene & resceyuouris & rente gedereris & hunteris, & leuen here gostly office vndon, & han more *wakyng & rekenyng & traueile for a litel worschipe & muk þan haue many trewe seruauntis of god for alle here doynge, & þe endis ben ful dyuerse. for þe first bisynesse & care, but ȝif god helpe þe more, bryngē euerlastyng care & peyne of helle; & þe toþer⁴ liȝt traueile & ioiful bryngiþ euerlastyng blisse of heuene in body & soule.

Capitulum 6^m.

Priests offer vain prayers for money. Prestis also disceyuen cristen men bi here veyn preieris & abhominable to god for here lecherie & oþere synnes; for þei taken ful mochil hire for to seie here matynes & masse &

¹ by AA.² couchen AA.³ omitted X.⁴ þat other AA.

oþere deuociouns, & þer-wiþ ben foul lecchouris,¹ ful of pride & coueitise, glotonye & ydelnesse; & maken þe peple wene þat here preieris ben acceptable to god, & ȝit god seiþ bi his prophete þat he curseþ suche wickid mennus blissyngis, and ² Mal. ii. 2. þat mannus preiere is abhominable & cursed þat turneþ a wey Prov. xxviii. 9. his here & heriþ not goddis lawe; & god seiþ bi þe prophete ysaie to suche wickid men þat he wol not here hem whanne Isaiah i. 18. þei maken many preieris; for who lyueþ³ best preieþ best, Good life the best prayer. & no man preiþ wel but ȝif he leue wel, as austyn & oþere Austyn. doctours techen pleyedly, þanne is here a gret disceit of euyl prestis. For whan men purposen to fynde trewe seruauentis to god, þei fynden his enemys & traitours, & here preieris cursed of god for here synful lif.

Capitulum 7^m.

Also þei magnifyen more newe songe founden of synful men þan þe gospel of ihū crist, þat is cristene mennus saluacion; for þei bisien hem fastere to kunne & do & teche þis newe song þan to kunne & kepe & teche cristis gospel; & þis is merueile, for þis song distractiþ þe syngere fro deuocion & lettith men fro consceiuyng of þe sentence; &, as austyn & gregory techen wel, preiere is betre herd of god bi compunccion & wepyng & stille devocion, as moyses & ihū crist diden, þan bi gret cryng & ioly chauntyng þat stireþ men & wommen to daunsyng & lettith men fro þe sentence of holy writt, as Magnificat, sanctus & agnus dei, þat is so broken bi newe knackyng. it semeþ þat god seiþ bi þes newe singeris as he dide in þe gospel to pharisees, “þis peple honoureþ me wiþ lippis but here herte is fer fro me, þei worschipen me wiþ-uten cause, techyng lore & comaundementis of men.” moyses & ihū crist & his apostlis preiden bi nyȝt stillely in hilles, wiþ clenness of lif & gret desir of riȝtwisnesse & brennyng charite to frende & enemys, & here fore god herde hym graciously. but now newe men crien

New fashioned
chaunting
hides the sense;

sets men and
women dancing.

Matt. xv. 8.

Apostles prayed
quietly by night.

These new ways
unlike theirs.

¹ lecherous X.

² omitted X.

³ leueth X.

hiȝe to mennus eris wiȝ stynckynge lecherie, pride, coueitise & opere synnes, & in wille to meyntene synful mennus ordynaunce contrarie to goddis ordynaunce, & desiren cruel vengauunce on here enemys; & herefore we axen oure owene dampnacion in þis preiere, & ȝif god suffre vs haue oure desir, þat is vengauunce of god to haue oure wille to grettere peynes of *helle, for god hatip vs.

*[p. 139 MS.]

Capitulum 8^m.

They care more for the Salisbury Ordinal than for Christian life.

ȝit þei chargen more þe ordynal of salusbury þan þe hestis of god; for ȝif a prest faile a poynt of his ordynal, þat is no poynt of cristene mennus feiþ, he schal be reprovéd scharply & openly anon & of manye. But þouȝ a prest faile opynly aȝenst goddis hestis bi veyn swerynge, bi pride, bi coueitise & vanyte & ydelnesse noman almost chargip þat, but lieȝeþ & iapiþ & helpip hym þer-to. ful vnable ben þes foolis to mynystre sacramentis & to be mediatours bitwixe god & synful man.¹

Capitulum 9^{m. 2}

Priests take vows rashly and are often unchaste.

They live sumptuously and idly.

Dally with nice women.
1 Cor. ix. 27.

2 Cor. xii. 7.

Also many prestis vnwisly taken a wow of chastite & defoulen wyues, widewis & maydens; For þei taken presthod for to lyuen esely & fare wel, & take no reward to here heiȝe hoot complexon, but norischen it in welfare of mete & drynk of þe beste & riche cloþis & softe beddis, & traueilen not, & ben ȝonge & idel & liȝt chered & wordid & han³ daliaunce wiȝ nyce wommen; & alle þis bryngeþ many brondis of lecherie; & siþ seynt poul chastised his flesch wiȝ so gret traueile & peyne & abstynence, & ȝit vnneþis myȝte he ouercome lustis of lecherie, hou may þes ȝonge foolis clene be kept fro þis synne wiȝ þis⁴ lusty lif & idel & daliaunce of wommen.

¹ men AA.

² In AA the numbering of this chapter is omitted, so that all which follow it are numbered one less than they should be.

³ omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

Capitulum 10^m.

Also þei doren not reprove men of here opyn synnes bi forme of þe gospel for displeisyng of here maistris & leesyng of here salarie; for many of hem seyn þus: "I wole not displeise him of whom I haue my lyuyng." a, 3e blynde foolis, drede 3e more to lese a morsel of mete þan o poynt of charite? drede 3e more to offende an erþely wrecche þan god almyȝtty? loue 3e more wombe ioie & worldly myrþe þan þank of god & ioie of heuene? sette 3e more prise bi 3oure styngyng bely þan bi 3oure lord? 3e reueren god & worschipen false goddis many weies & ben hugely cursed of þe holy trinyte & alle his aungelis. hou doren 3e, cursed wrecchis, seie 3oure masse in þis lif to 3oure dampnacion, 1 Cor. xi. 29. as god seiþ bi seynt poul, & ofte 3e reden it.

Capitulum 11^m.

Also for gostly liȝt of good ensauple & trewe techyng þei hilden out foul derkenesse of many synnys; for siþ god seiþ bi his prophete þat a prest is aungel of god, þat is a messenger to telle goddis wille to þe peple, & þei leuen þis & tellen lesyngis & wrecchidnessis of synnys, þei ben angeles of sathanas *transfigurid* into ¹ angelis of liȝt; for þei han name of holynesse & of goddis trewe *seruauntis* & ben not so in dede. & siþ crist seiþ in þe gospel þat prestis owen to be salt of þe erþe & liȝt of þe world, þat is myrrour & ensauple to make men bareyne fro synne & bi liȝt of trewe techyng bryng heþene men to cristene feiþ, hou ben þei not traitours to god * & *procuratouris* of sathanas whanne þei leuen þus * [p. 140 MS.] gostly lif & trewe *prechyng* of the gospel & 3euen ensauple of synne & boldnesse þer-inne?

Capitulum 12^m.

Also worldly prestis ben *anticristis* disciplis, sekyng here owene worldly honour² & wynnyng more þan goddis, &

Fear to reprove
vice in their
patrons.

Priests give ex-
ample of sin,
instead of being
patterns of holi-
ness.

Matt. v. 13, 14.

Seek earthly gain
more than to win
souls.

¹ & to X.

² hous X.

1 John ii. 22.

Isidore and
Jerome.

helpe of mennys soulis; for þei traueilen faste aboute here owene worldly honour and lucre & ben wode ȝif ony man speke aȝenst hem, but of goddis worschipe & helpe of cristene soulis chargen þei ful litel; & þat semeþ wel bi here lif, studye & spekyng, for it is aboute worldly goodis & not aboute studie & techyng of holy writt; & ion þe euangelist seiþ & seyn austyn declariþ þat þo men þat þus denyen ihū ben anticristis, & settiþ ensauple of forsworen men, of lechouris & coueitouse men & vsureris¹ & many moo; & seynt ysedore & ierom accorden þer-to.

Capitulum 13^m.

Priests are
traders, etc.,horse dealers,
maltsters,
cattle dealers,
meddlers at love
days.Bad priests the
worst of wicked
men.

Prestis also ben machauntis,² as comunly as³ worldly men & more sotil & falsere, & leuen here gostly office; for þei ben corseris & makers of malt, & bien schep & neet & sellen hem for wynnynge, & beten marketis, & entermeten hem of louedaies, holdynge wiþ fors of armes, þat þei ben myrroure of coueitise & worldly lif & pride & of discencion amonge cristene peple, for of alle wicked men weiward prestis ben chif whanne þei turne to cursednesse, for þei ben sotil & han reste & þe fend is more maistir in hem for brekyng of þe holy ordre.

Capitulum 14^m.

Priests care more
for forms of
service than for
preaching and
good life.Pretend devout-
ness.

Also þei ben foule ypocritis, clensynge þe gnatte & swolwynge þe g[r]ete camaile alhool; for ȝif þei failen in manere of here song & oþere newe sygnes founden of synful men þei chargen þat as a greuouse synne for to be dampnyd in helle þerfore, but þouȝ þei failen foule in prechyng of cristis gospel & holdynge of goddis hestis þei chargen not a straw, but raþere letten, dispisen & pursuen falsly þo prestis þat bisien hem to do þis grete poynt of charite; & ȝit⁴ þes ypocritis feynen hem ful holy in siȝte of þe peple, & knelyng

¹ usuris X.² marchauntis AA.³ omitted X.⁴ ȝit added in X by a later hand.

& knockynge on here brest & oþere signes, as ȝif þei wolen flee to god al hool, & ȝit ben his stronge enemys & disceyueris of his peple.

Capitulum 15^m.

ȝit þes worldly prestis ben lik to helle, neuere ful of Prov. xxvii. 20.
 coueitise in no degree; for þei connen not be a-paied wiþ a Covetousness of priests.
 resonable liflode ne resonable cloþinge, but euere redy to take Take all they can and pay only in bad prayers.
 of alle men þouȝ þei han no nede, & euele dispenden it &
 quiten not aȝen but stynkynge preiere bifore god, & lyuen
 forþ in ydelnesse & pride & oþere vanytes; for here herte is Idleness.
 ouermuche on worldly goodis & ¹ veyn statis, what euere þe
 tonge sch[e]wiþ wiþ-uten forþ. & this is a venymous rote
 þat makith here seruyce & preieris not acceptable to god &
 helpful to cristene peple as þei schulden be. * þerfore þis *[p. 141 MS.]
 coueitise schulde be fled of alle prestis, as ground of alle
 synnes as poul seiþ. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

Capitulum 16^m.

Also þei ben þeues, robbynge pore men of here sustenaunce
 bi colour of holynesse; for þei hiȝen faste to be prestis mo Men take orders because it is an easy life,
 þan ben nedful for þe peple, for to haue esy lif & welfare &
 han ² þe almes þat god ordeyned to pore nedy men þat han and eat up the alms that should keep the poor.
 not of here owene & may not labore for sikenesse or ³ elde;
 & al is demyd holynesse for helpe of here preieris, & ȝit þe
 beste of hem wot not what his preiere is worþe & where
 it turne to his owene dampnacion or saluacion. & certis þat
 man þat loueþ best god preieþ best, not for o man only The best prayer is that of the man who loves God best.
 but for alle men þat ben able to haue part þer-of, be he
 schephe[r]de or ploughman.⁴ þerfore prestis owen to lyuen
 wel & wasten not pore mennus liflode in pride, glotonye &
 oþere vanytes.

¹ omitted AA.² omitted X.³ of X.⁴ plowþman X.

Capitulum 17^m.

The excuses
priests make
for sin.

Prestis weiward of lif turnen vpsodoun *cristis* techynge bi lesyngis & ypocrisie; for þei colouren pride wiþ honeste & clenness, wraþþe & vengauunce bi manlynesse & riȝtwisnesse, enuye bi prudence & wisdom, coueitise bi riȝt traueile & wis kepyng of goodis to do almes in nede & pursuyng of riȝt, sleuþe bi sauynge of mannes body & worþinesse, glotonye bi largenesse & fedyng of pore men & helpynge of viteleris & oþere men of craftis, dronkenesse bi good felaweschipe & gendryng of charite & solasyng of mennus wittis, lecherie bi helpynge forþ of þe world & kyndely dede; & þis þei don to excuse here owene synne, & norischen oþere men þer-inne for þank & worldly wynnyng; but certis þes ben *anticristis* & *perilous heretikis*.

Capitulum 18^m.

They fail to warn
their patrons of
their sins.

Also þei ben foule ypocritis & setten more prise be an oxe, hors or asse þan bi þe soule of here maistir þat costiþ mychil on hem; for ȝif þei seen vnresonable bestis of here maistris or oþere mennus fallen in a *perilous* lake þei wolen traueile & helpe & crien to men aboute til þe vnresonable beste be out of *perils*; but þouȝ here maistris¹ soule be in þe foule lake of old custumable synne, & body & soule in poynt to be dampned wiþ-oute ende, þei schullen not helpe to bryng hem out of þis *peril*, neiþer bi trewe conseilyng ne trewe prechyng ne stiryng of gostly frendis to þis helpe; & her-by þei schewen þat here herte is seeit to loue his muk & not is soule. but where ben falsere *traitouris* þan þes prestis þat wole not helpe here maistris² out of þis moste *peril*, but raþere norische hem & conseile hem þer-inne for to haue here owene lustis & welfare.

Capitulum 19^m.

Many of them
poison their
masters' minds
against good
priests,

Many of hem poisonen³ gostily here maistris for þe benefices þat þei receyuen of hem; for þei conseilen here maistris faste

¹ maistir X.

² his maistre X.

³ poison X.

þat þei tristen not to pore prestis & witty clerkis trewely techynge þe gospel & comaundementis of god & where men owe to do here almes, but lyuen forþ after *olde errouris & lesyngis & anticristis prechouris þat prechen for here wynnynges & fablis & newe soteltes for veyn name of clergie, & bidde hem do as here fadris diden, þat many tyme lyuede in falsnesse to gete goodis of þis world and myspondeden¹ hem in pride & glotonye, & þei witen neuere where þei dieden out of charite & ben dampned in helle; & þus þei conseilen here maistris to lyue forþ in here cursede synne & not to amende hem.

*[p. 142 MS.]
and bid them to
go on in old bad
ways.

Capitulum 20^m.

Also þei disceyuen þe peple in feiþ of cristendom; for þei maken þe peple ween þat þei schullen not haue part of here preieris, þouþ þei ben in charite, but ȝif þei paien moche money to a prest þat is ydel & vicious. for ȝif men wisten þat þei schulden haue part of alle goode preieris bi mercy of god as moche as is riȝtful, þei wolden do here almes to here pore neiȝeboris as crist biddiþ, & not fynde so many worldly prestis þat kunnen no goode & non wolen lerne, ne teche opere men to lyue wel² ne lyue wel² hem self. but þus þei maken hem maistris & lordis of goode preieris & sillen hem to men þat hem likiþ for money, & taken not reward to partynges of god, hou he is chief lord & grauntiþ part of good preieris to euery goode man þat is in grace as moche as is riȝtful.

They claim falsely
to be able to re-
strict and assign
the benefit of
their prayers to
those who pay
for them.

God gives to
every good man
a share in all good
prayers.

Capitulum 21^m.

Wykede prestis also disceyuen cristene men in hope; for þei techen þat men schullen haue more þank of god to do here almes to riche freris & false pardoners & to make grete waste housynge, þanne helpe here pore neiȝeboris in cloþinge & housynge & out of dette & prison, & parische chirchis

Teach men to
give alms to friars
and pardoners
instead of to the
poor;

¹ mysponden X.

²⁻² omitted X.

vplond; & *certis* þis is *anticristis* techynge, for men ernen & geten moche wraþþe of god in doynge syche nouelries for worldly name & ignoraunce, þe whiche nouelries god biddiþ not, & in leuyngge werkis of mercy where god comaundiþ hem to be don, for bi þis techynge þei wenen þat it is almes

that is, to mis-
spend their goods

to myspenden¹ here goodis & leuen goddis comaundement vndo.

Capitulum 22^m.

They encourage
war by offering
pardons, etc.,

Also þei disceyuen cristene men in charite; for þei conforten hem to fiȝtte aȝenst cristene men in false werris for pride & coueitise bi sikernesse of here veyn preieris þat ben cursed of

and by crying
Ora pro nobis
about the street.

god; & hereto þei wolen crie ora *pro nobis* abouten þe grete stretis þat god distroie here cristene breþeren & ȝeue hem schort lif, euyl sped & wicked ende; & here-bi þei axen here owen dampnacion, as god seiþ in þe pater noster & oþere

It would be better
to pray for recon-
ciliation.

placis of þe gospel. it were betre to crie faste þat þe peple amendid here lif, & þat god helpe vs & oure enemys aȝenst þe fend & make us frendis in crist.

Capitulum 23^m.

They encourage
rich men to sup-
port mass priests
instead of sup-
porting children
at school.

*[p. 143 MS.]

ȝit þes worldly prestis disceyuen riche men in here almes; for þei wolen not stire riche men to fynde pore children able of witt & lyuyngge to scole for to lerne, but to fynde proude

prestis at hom to crie faste in þe chirche in siȝtte of *þe world, & helpe² to serue hem at þe mete & oþere worldly offices; &

They get support
also for law
students, who do
mischief,

ȝit þei stiren hem to fynde summe prestis to lawe, þat maken false dyuorsis & holden false causes & dispisen oþere symple prestis þat lyuen in mekenesse & deuocion & medlen not of

but do not lead
men to support
good preachers.

syche pledynge, but þei stiren not riche men to fynde a good deuout prest able of witt & wille to lerne holy writt & preche it freely to þe peple to saue here soulis; & þis makiþ moche þat holy writt is not knowen ne kept, ne tauȝt trewely & frely as it schulde be.

¹ myspendynge X.

² hope X.

Capitulum 24^m.

Also þei maken riche men & tirauntis to holde werre
 aȝenst god after here deþ day; for whanne þes riche
 marchauntis & tirauntis dien & mowen no lengere meyntene
 synne in þis world bi here owen persone, þan þei fynden many
 worldly & synful prestis, bi goodis falsly geten þat schulden
 be restorid to pore men, not to lerne & teche holy writt as
 crist comaundiþ but dwelle at o place & crie on hey wiþ newe
 song þat lettij deuocion & þe sentence to be vnderstonden; &
 þes worldly prestis letten most oþere prestis þat lyuen wel &
 techen wel, last here synne be aspied & here wynnynge &
 bodily ayse ceese.

They make rich
 men found chan-
 tries,

where they keep
 up useless chant-
 ing.

Capitulum 25^m.

Also þei disceyuen þe peple to holde forþ here olde cursed
 lif & synne; for þei seyn þat þei wolen preie for hem, & þei
 schullen ben excused to-fore god for þe almes þat þei don in
 fyndynge hem to seie masse & matynes & euensong & placebo
 & dirige; & herbi þe peple is bolder to dwelle in synne. but
 þes prestis schulden witnesse opynly þat alle þe seyntis in
 heuene may not brynge a man to heuene wiþ-uten his owen
 goode lif, kepynge þe hestis of God, & endynge in charite.

They lead men to
 trust in masses,
 etc., instead of
 leading a good
 life.

All the saints
 cannot bring a
 bad man to
 heaven.

Capitulum 26^m.

Also þes euele prestis pursuen crist in his membris & nailen
 hym on þe croos of lesynges & vnkyndenesse; for þei
 slaundren cristis seruauntis wiþ lesynges & haten hem, &
 helpe to lette hem fro trewe prechyng bi suspendynge,
 symonyng¹ & cursynge & mannis iurdiccioun, & seyn þat it
 was god world be for þat prestis precheden & siþ haþ ben
 discencion & werris & pestilencis; & alle þis is to lette goddis
 word þat it be not knowen & kept & opynly tauȝt. & þei
 slaundren goddis lawe wiþ many errouris & maken it
 vnsawory to worldly men, for as moche as þei wolden þat it

They persecute
 Christ's servants
 and try to stop
 preaching.

They slander
 God's law.

¹ somenyng AA.

were not knowe[n] lesse¹ þei were lettid of here² coueitise & bodily welfaire & aise, & it is al on to pursue þus cristis seruauantis & to pursue crist, as he seiþ in þe gospel, & to lie þus on his lawe & to lien on him self as ion crisostom & austyn & ambrose witnessen.

Capitulum 27^m.

Also þei dreden more synful men & in cas fendis of helle þan almyȝtty god in trinyte; for þouȝ god comaundid hem to preche³ goddis lawe in word & ensauple, & faouere trewe men & helpe hem & preche þe gospel, þis doren þei not done ne⁴ helpe oþere þer-to for drede of a wrongful maundement *of a bischop or his officeris; for þanne⁵ þei schulden be somoned & traueiled & dispised & suspendid of here masse as þei dreden, and alle þis were medful ȝif þei wolden take it patiently. but þei dreden ouere litel þe grete peyne of helle to whiche god schal sende hem for defaute of charite &⁶ doynge his wille bifore alle oþere þingis; & þus þei dreden more þe bischopis lettre þan þe gospel of crist, & so þe bischop more þan oure lord god almyȝtty, & þis is foule blasphemye.

*[p. 144 MS.]
Obey the bishops
rather than God

for fear of the
courts.

Capitulum 28^m.

They leave God's
work undone,

ȝit þei leuen seruyce of god vndon for a cursed sathanas & anticrist biddiþ hem ceesse; for whanne þe bischop or his mynystris somonen hem & þei comen not but ben betre occupied to serue god in deuocion & clenness of lif & to helpe cristene soulis to heuene, a noon þei schullen be suspendid fro seyng of masse & prechyng of þe gospel; & þus þei leuen goddis seruyce & comaundementis vndon for þe comaundement of anticrist & sathanas; & þus bischopis officeris & curatis & prestis fallen oute of bileue & renne in-to blasphemye & heresie & drawen þe comyn peple after hem in-to errour.

because the
bishop suspends
them.

¹ last AA.

³ teche AA.

² here not in X. through the margin being cut away.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵ omitted X.

⁶ in AA.

Capitulum 29^m.

But goode prestis, þat lyuen wel in clenness in þouȝt ^{Nobleness of priest's office.} & ¹ speche & ¹ dede & good ensaumples to þe peple, & techen goddis lawe vp here kunnynges, & traueile fast nyȝt & day to lerne betre & teche opynly & lastyngly, ben verrey prophetis of god & holy aungelis of god & gostly liȝt of þe world, as god seyþ bi his prophetis & ihū crist in þe gospel, & seyntis declaren it wel bi auctorite & reson. ȝe prestis þenke on þis ^{Exhortation to priests} noble office & worþi, & doþ it wilfully vpon ȝoure kunnynges & power. þenke, ² ȝe lordis & myȝtty men þat fynden prestis, ^{and lords,} hou dredeful it is to meyntene worldly prestis in here lustis, þat neiþer kunnen goode ne wolen lerne ne lyuen holiliche in þis noble ordre. for ȝe may liȝtly amende hem wiþ-oute ^{who can amend evil.} coste or traueile, tellynge hem þat ȝe wolen not fynde hem but ȝif þei don here besynesse to lyue wel & lerne & preche þe gospel, & certis þan þei wolden don it in dede. A, þenke ȝe, grete men, þat þis were a þousand fold betre þan to conquere al þe world, & her-by schulde be no more cost to ȝou ne traueile ne deisese, but worschipe to god & endeles good to ȝouwre ³ self, to prestis & to alle cristendom. god for his endeles mercy & charite brynge þis holy ende. Amen.

¹ in AA.² ȝenke X.³ ȝow AA.

IX.

THREE THINGS DESTROY THIS WORLD.

THERE is nothing in this tract which can give us any certainty as to authorship or date. It should be noticed that the false confessors are friars; and that the lawyers, who are charged with gross hypocrisy, are priests.

The complaints of packing and bribing juries are worth notice.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

False confessors are the chief cause of sin, since they excuse sins on condition of gifts to religious houses. They waste money in luxurious living, and get dispensation from their rule	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	p. 181
Wicked lawyers encourage quarrels, suborn perjury, pack juries, oppress the poor.								
They pretend to be religious	....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	182
Ecclesiastical lawyers worst of all. They uphold the Civil Law above God's Law.								
They make divorces, and raise quarrels between man and wife	.....	.....						184
False merchants cheat, and teach their apprentices and servants to cheat. They are usurers	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	185
False confessors worst of all, since they encourage the rest	.....	.....	.....					186

Þre þingis distroien þis world, false confessoures, false
men of lawe, & false marchauntis.

*False confessouris ben cause of alle þe synne þat regneþ among clerkis, among lordis, amonge comunes; for þei taken þe charge to hele alle men of synne, & don not here power þer-to, but meynntenen & conforten hem þer-inne for worldly wynnynge, frendshipe & worschipe. for þei schulden teche hem here grete synnes & peynes for hem, & but ȝif men wolden leue here synnes & taken goddis word in reuerence, þei schulden leue here companye, & go to oþere to whom þei myȝten profite more, as crist tauȝte his apostlis. & þat is worse, þei seyn¹ þat þei wolen answeere for men at domes day for to excuse hem ȝif þei wolen ȝefe hem or here hous to make gaye wyndowis or veyn housynge & nedles moche gold or siluer; & so þat þat schulde be delid among most nedy men bi comaundement of god þei wasten in veyn & nedles houses, & þat þing þat schulde be restorid men, for it was taken of hem bi extorsion & wronge menys, þei taken to hemself to maken festis to riche men. ²lordis þei resceyuen to here housynge, & letten osteleris of here offices & wynnynge, & maken iubilees þat we reden not³ of, of⁴ kyngis ne emperouris, to be þanne excused of risynge at mydnyȝt & oþere deuociouns in whiche as þei seyn stondiþ perfeccion of here ordre. & þus whanne þei schulden be most perfit þei leuen here perfeccion & maken veyn cost & gret,⁵ not to *fede pore men but lordis þat han no nede, to forsake þat þat sumtyme was perfeccion. & ȝif þe potestatis of here ordre dispynsen wiþ hem lawefully, þan þei maken hem more perfit in lif þan þei weren bifore, for ellis þei don hem harm in soule & peieren hem to godward, þat no creature may lesefully⁶ do; þan it were more perfeccion to leue here singuler obedience & obseruāuncis, as þei don now in most perfeccion, & ellis þei

*[p. 160 MS]
False confessors
confirm men in
their sins.

Luke x. 10.

They will excuse
any sins, if men
will make gifts
to their houses.

Waste the alms
that should go to
the poor,

Seek excuses to
escape their rule.

*[p. 161 MS.]

Dispensations
from rule are
profitable.

Then it would be
better to leave
the rule.

¹ AA inserts for þei sei.

² X inserts as.

³ omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵ omitted X.

⁶ leffully AA.

ben cursed alle þat approuen sicke iubilees & dispensacions.

And siþ þis dispensacion is wel don as þei seyn, þan god

The only cause
for altering a rule
is that a man
may serve God
better.

approueþ it for certeyn cause, but oþere cause is þer noone

but þat þis man schal betere serue god wiþ-uten þes

obseruaunces þan to holden hem forþ; þanne what man frere

or munk schal betere serue god wiþ-uten sicke obseruauncis

of freris or munkis þan wiþ hem, god approueþ þat þat frere

or monk leue here obseruauncis & turne to fredom of cristis

gospel. But it semeþ whanne lordis heren¹ a false confessour

þei hiren an anticrist to leden hem to helle. And þus false

False confessors
the devil's nurses.

confessouris ben þe fendis norisses² to norisse mennus soulis in

synne & to brynge hem to sathanas; & þus in a maner þei

sillen soulis to sathanas for a litel stynkyng drit or wombe

ioie or pride & worldly worschipe, & þus þei ben traitouris to

god almyȝtty, to clerkis, lordis & comeneris, & dampnen hem self.

Wicked lawyers

Also false men of lawe disceyuen moche þis world, for

þei tellen not sadly & trewely hou þe lawe stondiþ. But

encourage
quarrels,

norischen pledyng & debate among men for to haue a veyn

name & wynnen hem a litil worldly stynkyng muk wiþ

goddis curs, & wittingly meyntenen³ þe fals partie bi

cauelacions, & forbarien⁴ pore men of riȝt, þat þouȝ a pore man

han neuere so muche⁵ riȝt ȝit þei wole make many doseyns to

suborn perjury,

forswren hem on þe book to gete hem self þank or wynnynge.

but þes ben false procuratouris of sathanas to dryue mennus

soulis to helle; for ȝif þer be a trewe man in a contre he

pack and intimi-
date juries,

schal not come on⁶ his queste ȝif he may deuoyde hym, & ȝif

he seie þe soþe he schal haue his⁷ hate, sclaudryng, loos of

his catel or of his lif in þis⁸ world; & þes laweieris þanken &

flateryn & meyntenen false men & helpen hem⁹ what þei

may; & þus þei ben special procurators & false knyȝttis or

champions of þe deuyl to meyntenen falsenesse, & distroien

treuþe & knyȝttis of treuþe, equitye & charite; & herby þei

get the land into
their hands and
ruin the real
heirs.

geten¹⁰ hem gold¹⁰ & purchasen rentis & londis of lordis &

¹ hiren AA. ² norisses, a later hand in X. ³ in mayntenens AA.

⁴ forbarren AA. ⁵ opyn AA.

⁶ to AA.

⁷ is X. ⁸ AA inserts wrecchid. ⁹ omitted X. ¹⁰⁻¹⁰ omitted X.

distroien verrey heieris, & þis distroieþ moche¹ oure lond.
 for hou schulde riȝt be among suche men, þat þis day han but Their riches come too fast to be honest.
 here penye & anoon purchasen rentis & londis to be peris wiþ
 knyttis or barons. Certis falsnesse avaunseþ hem, & þerfore þei
 maken sacrifice to þe fend. lord, hou schal god here hem in
 here moste nede, siþ þei wolen not here a pore man, haue *he *[p. 162 MS.] They will not hear the poor.
 neuere so grete riȝt. certis siþ men schullen be dampnyd for Will be damned for their oppressions.
 defaute of werkis of mercy, moche more þei þat wolen not
 opene here mouþ to speke o word for treuþe & goddis loue;
 but moche more schullen þei be dampnyd for extorcions &
 false plees þat þei meyntenen wittingly, or whanne þei owe
 to witte it, aȝenst trewe partie; but most þei schullen be depe
 dampnyd for here grete ypocrisie, for þei maken it so holy Their pretences of religion.
 boþe in word & signes, as knockynge on here brest, knelynge
 & seiynge of matynes & euensong, & herynge of massis, &
 many oþere deuocions to coloure here falsnesse, þat symple
 men supposen no more riȝtwisnesse in ony man þat leueth in
 herþe. but ȝit iurouris in questis wolen forsweren hem Jurors often forswear themselves for a dinner and a noble,
 wittingly for here dyner & a noble, & þat so custumablice þat
 þouȝ a man haue neuere so opyn riȝt to a lordischepe anemptis
 mannys lawe & also goddis, þat many questis wolen wittingly
 swere þat it is not his for a litel money; & so þei sillen crist
 þat is treuþe, as iudas dide, for a litel money, & þei ben so the more that they get absolution so easily.
 esely assoiled, but falsly of false confessouris for a litel part
 here wicked catel, þat þei maken no conscience for þis cursed
 periurie but ben endurid or hardid þer-inne as fendis of helle.
 & þus lordis & oþere men ben nedid for þis falsnesse to holden Lords are obliged to keep them in pay.
 hem at fees & oþere grete costis, for ellis wiþ here wiles &
 falnesse þei wolen dryue lordis & gentil men out of here housis,
 heritage & alle here goodis; & bi þis falsnesse a fewe pore
 wrecchis myȝten² conqueren in-to here owene hondis³ in
 schort tyme almost al þe lordischepe þat may be sold on ony⁴
 resonable manere. & þouȝ it be bouȝt opynly aȝenst þe lawe, They make it as costly to defend one's own property as to buy a new one.
 ȝit bi cauellacions þes lawieris holden it forþ, þat þe riȝtful
 heir may as wel bien a straunge⁵ lordischepe as geten his

¹ AA inserts of. ² omitted X. ³ housis AA. ⁴ only X. ⁵ stronge X.

owene. ¶ Also falsse laweieris maken lordis & opere men to meynntenen false causis & do wrongis to here neiȝeboris, whanne þe lordis wenen þat it is soþ, & so priuely maken lordis¹ dampnable for here wrong meyntenynge.

Ecclsiastical
lawyers the worst
of any.

But of laweiris of þe consistorie or chapitris is more synne & ypocrisie to schewe. for þei tarien men in here courtis þouȝ þe riȝt neuere so pleyn, þat men ben ful [weary] of here peyneful lif so þei ben hurlid abouten; for ȝif a trewe man be

They keep causes
so long that it is
always cheapest
to pay a fine,
right or wrong.

falsly sclaunderide & come among hem it is liȝttere to make a fyn for moche money þan to purge hym, be it neuere so opyn knowen; for ellis he schal be hurlid fro contre to contre, fro day to day, þat he schal be cotumax & cursed, & þanne stonde at here wille, or ellis for traueile & cost be ful [weary] of his lif. ¶ And þouȝ a man be neuere so cursed, ȝif he wole paie an

*[p. 163 MS.]
Sin-rents.

annuel rente to þes lawieris & to *þe cursed court or to bischopis almes, he schal baþe hym in his synne as longe as he wole þus paie; & ȝif þere be ony good bischop þat wole chace þe fendis of lecherie or vsurie & sicche moo, anoon coueitous laweieris wiþ here gnackis & iapis, delaies, excusacions & fals appellis, letten þe bischop to ponysche þis synne. & cursednesse of þis synne regneþ forþ bi a ȝeer, hauynge þe apel in þe heiȝere court, & sumtyme as long as þis cursed man lyueþ; & also whanne a trewe prest wolde bi goode conscience & bi

Even if a bishop
would do his
duty, the lawyers
stop him.

They set up the
civil law against
the gospel.

forme of þe gospel distroie synne, þan lawieris maken procees bi sotilte & cauylacions of lawe cyuyle, þat is moche heþene mennus lawe, & not accepten the forme of þe gospel, as ȝif þe gospel were not so good as paynymes lawe. & þus þei seyn þe gospel is not ynowȝ to reule holy chirche by, but synful mennus lawis ful of errour ben more nedful þan þe gospel þer-to. & þus þei seyn in dede þat crist was a fool & out of charite; for siþ he tauȝte not þe beste lawe for to reule cristene mennys soulis bi, as þei seyn, he was out of charite; for he myȝtte & coude ȝeue þe beste, & siþ he demyd þat þe gospel was þe beste, & it is not þe beste as þei seyn,

¹ Some pages are wanting here in AA. containing all the rest of the tract except six lines at the end.

þan þei seyn þat crist was a fool. & so þei putten þe gospel bihynde & dispisen it & magnyfien paynymes lawes & opere synful mennys lawes for þe beste, & seyn in dede þat paynymes & opere synful men, þat in caas be dampnyd deuelis, weren wisere & betre þan ihū crist, siþ þei ʒeuen betre lawes & more nedful for holy chirche þan euere dide ihū crist; & herefore þei reulyn clerkis bi þes worldly wronge lawis, & maken oure clerkis worldly & to forsake holy writt, for it dampneþ pride & coueitise clerkis & techeþ mekenesse & to flee coueitise & opere synnes. But paynymes lawe & worldly clerkis lawe meyntene pride, coueitise, extorcions & opere synnes, & þer-fore þei ben studied of worldly clerkis, & goddis owene wordis ben dispised. ¶ Also þei maken men to forsweren hem & norischen hem þerinne, & maken men to charge more þe peny þan þe trewe conscience & maundementis of god, & þer-to maken dyuors bi false witnessse & opere cautelis, & so reisen debatis & enemytes bitwene weddid men & here wiwes bi many priue menys of anticrist. & ʒit þe fend techeþ hem to make orible peynes of here owene wille for smale synnys, to make men for fere to paye moche money to hem; & riche men & myʒtti ben not ponyschid bi here lawis, be here synne neuere so opyn, but pore men ben ponyschid, ʒe þouʒ þei ben trewe & clene, but ʒif þei paien to anticrist aftir his wille. & þus *þes courtis ben courtis of wrong & falsnesse & not cristis but þe fendis, to exile treuþe & charite & holy writt & to meyntene falsnesse & synne & magnifyen synful mennys lawis more þan þe gospel.

Make divorces by false witness.

Cause quarrels between men and their wives.

*[p. 164 MS.]

¶ Also false marchauntis bryngen vp & susteynen moche synne to distroie þe world; for þei lyuen comynly bi falsnesse as bi false swerynge, false mesure & false weitis, & techen þis falsnesse to ʒonge prentis, & preisen hym most þat foulest raymeþ alle þe membris of crist falsly, & most sotilly can bigilen þe peple, & ʒif ony seruauent of here wole do treuþe & drede synne he is holden but a fool & vnþrifty & schal neuere be man; & ʒit þes false marchauntis bien gret chep & sillen out of cours dere & bringen fro heþene men, & opere

False merchants cheat, and teach their apprentices and servants to cheat and lie,

encourage
luxury,

are usurers,

lead evil lives.

The false con-
fessours are the
worst of all;

for they let these
men live in their
sins if they will
endow religious
houses.

cursed men þat han name of cristene men, many newe gises of pride & worldly vanyte, & magnyfien hem aboue þe cloudis; where-fore þe lordis & oþere men ben drawn fro þinkyng of god & heuenely þingis, & setten here wittis & likyngis in þes newe vanytees & fantom of worldly glorie. & þe moste of here wynnynge stondiþ in fals vsure, so moche þat þei han enuynmed almost alle clerkis, alle lordis, & alle oþere men wiþ þis cursed vsure; summe bi doynge of vsure, summe bi consentynge þer-to & for meynntenynge þer-of, & so þei bringen cursyngis to alle men comynly of oure lond. & ȝit þei lyuen in glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie as hoggis, & in coueitise, ydelnesse, pride, enuye & wrabbe as fendis; & þis cursed lif þei techen in word & dede to oþere pore men as sathanas procuratouris & cursed heretikis. but ȝit false confessouris þat leden hem & reulen hem in þis cursed lif, & wolen not tellen hem þe soþe for drede of lesynge of here frendischipe & worldly wynnynge but conforten hem in þis synful lif & vndertaken for here synnes at domes day, don most cursed synne of alle. for þei techen þes foolis to make gret cost of wast houses of freris or of oþere veyn religion, or to holde proude & worldly prestis, or to founde a college of worldly clerkis or religious aȝenst goddis lawe, & þer-bi to be sauȝd þouȝ þei dwellen stille in here synne & maken no restitution to men þat þei han disceyued, & þouȝ þei don not here almes to pore men & nedy þat ben bedered & mowe not helpe hem self, but suffren hem to perische for myschief. & þus lordis & riche men hiren false confessouris wiþ grete spensis þat leden hem faste to helle; & þe comune peple is constreyned bi anticristis lawis to meyntene wiþ tipis & offryngis false curatis & confessouris, þat disceyuen hem in techynge of goddis lawe & norischen hem in synne & so leden hem to helle. And þus bi þes men¹ falsnesse regneþ, & treuþe & vertuous lif ben distroied, & so þes þre fals men distroien þis world boþe in soule & in² worldly goodis.

¹ many X.

² omitted X.

X.

OF FEIGNED CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE.

I THINK this is an early work of Wyclif's. It is certainly higher in tone and better in style than many in this volume. Especially to be noticed is the passage on p. 193, where the author, after inveighing against the heavy burden of ritual ordinances laid upon priests, returns upon himself with the warning that men must not abuse the freedom to which he exhorts them by making it an excuse for sloth, for that is the devil's snare. So, too, the complaint (p. 194) that priests lead a lower life than their conscience dictates, for fear of hurting the sick conscience of their brethren, is a touch finer than is common in these polemical papers. How often may Wyclif's impetuous exhortations to revolt have been parried by such considerations as these?

The scribe who wrote the Corpus MS. (X.) made a curious blunder with this tract, as has been pointed out by Mr. Arnold, S. E. W. III. 507. Owing most likely to the displacement of some leaves in the MS. from which he copied, he transferred the last part of this tract to the end of "A Petition to the King and Parliament," while bringing the last part of the Petition to the end of this. As is often the case with him, he passed over the junction in happy unconsciousness that he was writing nonsense.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

Contemplation (so called) is made an excuse for not preaching	.....	.....	.....	p. 188
Contemplation to come in heaven after good life here	.....	.....	.....	189
The devil prevents men from preaching by diverting their attention to singing in a tricky and artificial way	.....	.....	.....	191
In a large choir a few sing and the rest stand dumb	.....	.....	.....	192
The Ordinal of Salisbury interferes with preaching, for it burdens men with so many rites that they have no time for good works	.....	.....	.....	192
Men who know better waste their time on services for fear of giving offence	.....	.....	.....	194
Worldly business hinders preaching	.....	.....	.....	194
Christ and his Apostles preached and did not administer alms	.....	.....	.....	195

Of feyned contemplatif lif, of song, of þe ordynal of salisbury, & of bodely almes & worldly bysynesse of prestis; hou bi þes foure þe fend lettij hem fro prechyng of þe gospel.

*[p. 165 MS.]
Contemplative
life made a plea
for not preaching.

*First whanne trewe men techen bi goddis lawe wit & reson þat eche prest owij to do his myȝt, his¹ wit & his wille to preche cristis gospel, þe fend² blyndij ypocritis to excuse hem by feyned contemplatif lif, & to seie þat siþ it is þe beste & þei may not do boþe to-gidre, þei ben nedid for charite of god to leue þe prechyng of þe gospel & lyuen in contempla- cion. See nowe þe ypocrisie of þis false seiynge; crist tauȝt & dide þe beste lif for prestis, as oure feij techij, siþ he was god &

Christ bid his
disciples preach.
Luc ix. & x.
Mark xvi. [15.]

myȝte not erre; but crist preched þe gospel & charged alle his apostlis & disciplis to goo & preche þe gospel to alle men: þan it is þe beste lif for prestis in þis world to preche³ & teche³

Isaiah lviii. [1.]
Ezekiel iii. 17 and
xxxiii. 7.

þe gospel. ¶ Also god in þe olde lawe techij þat þe office of a prophete is to schewe to þe peple here foule synnys; but eche

Gregory.

prest is a prophete bi his ordre, as gregory seyþ vpon þe gospellis, þanne it is þe office of eche prest to preche & telle þe synnys of þe peple, & in þis manere schal eche prest be an

Mal. ii. [7].
Examples of
Christ and John
Baptist.
Mat. iii. & iv. & v.

aungel of god as holy writt seiþ. ¶ Also Crist & ion baptist leften desert & precheden þe gospel to here deþ þerfore, & þis was most charite, for ellis þei weren out of charite or peierid in charite, þat myȝte not be in hem boþe, siþ þe ton was god, & no man after crist was holyere þan baptist & he synned not

Jer. i. [5.]

for þis prechyng. ¶ Also þe holy prophete Jeromye halwid in his moder wombe myȝtte not be excused fro prechyng bi his contemplacion, but chargid of god to preche þe synnes of þe peple & suffre hard⁴ payne þerfore, & so weren alle þe prophetis of god. ¶ A lord, siþ crist and ion baptist & alle þe prophetis of god weren nedid bi charite to come out of desert

¹ and AA.

² fendis X.

³⁻³ omitted X.

⁴ omitted X.

to *preche* to þe peple & leue here solitarie¹ *preiere*, hou dore we fonnyd heretikys seie þat it is betre to be stille & *preie* oure owen fonnyd ordynaunce þan to *preche cristis gospel*? Lord, what cursed spirit of lesyngis stirih *prestis* to close hem in stonys or wallis for al here lif, siþ crist comaundiþ to alle his apostlis & *prestis* to goo in-to alle þe world & *preche þe gospel*. *certis* þei ben opyn foolis & don pleylnly aʒenst *cristis gospel* &, ʒif þei meyntenen þis errour, þei ben cursed of god² & ben *perilous ypocritis* & heretikis also; & siþ men ben holden heretikis þat done aʒenst þe popis lawe,³ & þe beste part of þe popis lawe³ seiþ pleylnly þat eche þat comeþ to *presthod* takiþ þe office of a bedele or criere to goo bifore domesday *to crie to þe peple here synnes & vengauce of god, *[p. 166 MS.] whi ben not þo *prestis* heretikis þat leuen to *preche cristis gospel*, & compelle oþere treue men to leue *prechyng*e of þe gospel, siþ þis lawe is seynt gregoryes lawe, groundid opynly in Gregory. goddis lawe & reson & charite, & oþere lawes of þe peple ben contrarie to holy writt & reson & charite for to meyntene pride & coueitise of *anticristis* worldly clerkis. but ypocritis allegen þe gospel, þat magdaleyne chees to hereself þe beste part whanne she saat bisiden *cristis* feet & herde his word; soþ⁴ it is þat þis meke sittynge & deuout herynge of *cristis* wordis was best to magdeleyne, for sche hadde not office of *prechyng*e as *prestis* han, siþ sche was a womman þat hadde not auctorite of goddis lawe to teche & *preche* opynly. but what is þis dede to *prestis* þat han expresse þe comaundement of god & men to *preche þe gospel*? where þei wolen alle be wommen in ydelnesse, & suen not ihū crist in lif & *prechyng*e þe gospel þat he comaundiþ hym self boþe in þo olde lawe and newe. ¶ Also þis peisible⁵ herynge of *cristis* word & brennyng loue þat magdeleyne hadde was þe beste part, for it schal be ende in heuene of good lif in þis world; but in þis world⁶ þe beste lif for *prestis* is holy lif in kepyng goddis hestis & trewe *prechyng*e of þe gospel, as crist dide &

The Pope's law says the priest is a crier.

Gregory.

Mary Magdalen not to be taken as a model, since she was a woman and not a priest.

Contemplative life to come in heaven.

¹ solarie X.

² omitted X.

³⁻³ omitted X.

⁴ seiþ AA.

⁵ posible X.

⁶ lif X.

These hypocrites
take dreaming for
contemplation.

Luke xxi. 36.

1 Thess. v. 17.

"Pray without
ceasing," is not
said of spoken
prayer.

Austyn.

Prov. xxviii. 9.

Possessioners

*[p. 167 MS.]

ought to learn
what contempla-
tive life is.

chargid alle his prestis to do ¹þe same¹; & þes ypocritis wenen þat here dremys & fantasies of hem-self ben contemplacion, & þat prechyng of þe gospel be actif lif, & so þei menen þat crist tok þe worse lif for þis world, & nedid alle prestis to leue þe betre & take the worse lif; & þus þes fonnyd ypocritis putten *errour* in ihū crist. But who ben more heretikis? ¶ Also þes blynde ypocritis alleggen þat crist biddiþ vs preie euermore, & poul biddiþ þat we preie wiþ-oute lettyng, & þan we prestis may not preche as þei feynen falsly. but here þes ypocritis schullen wite þat crist & poul vnderstonden of preiere of holy lif, þat eche man doþ as longe as he dwelliþ in charite; & not of babelyng of lippis þat no man may euere do wiþ-outen cessyng, for ellis no man in þis world myȝte fulfille þe comaundement of crist; & þis techiþ austyn & oþere seyntis. & siþ men þat fulfillen not goddis lawe & ben out of charite ben not acceptid in here preiynge of lippis, for here preiere in lippis is abhomynable, as holy writt seiþ bi salomon, þes prestis þat prechen not þe gospel as crist biddiþ ben not able to preie god² for mercy, but disceyuen hemself & þe peple & dispisen god & stiren hym to wrapþe & vengauce, as austyn & gregory & oþere seyntis techen; & principaly þes ypocritis þat han rentes & worldly lordischipes & parische chirchis appropid to hem, aȝenst holy writt boþe *old & newe by symonye & lesyngis on³ crist & his apostelis for stynkyng gronyngys & a-bite of holynesse & for⁴ distroiyng of goddis ordynaunce & for singuler profession maade to foolis & in cas to fendis of helle. þes foolis schullen lerne what is actif lif & contemplatif bi goddis lawe, & þanne þei myȝtten wite þat þei han neiþer þe ton ne þe toiþer, siþ þei chargen more veyn statutis of⁵ synful men, & in cas of⁶ deuelys, þan þei chargen þe heste of god & werkis of mercy & poyntis of charite. & þe fende blyndiþ hem so moche þat þei seyn in-dede þat þei moten

¹—¹ omitted X.

⁴ fro X.

² omitted X.

⁵ & X.

³ & X.

⁶ omitted X.

neuere preie to plesynge¹ of god, siþ þei vnablen hem self to do þe office of prestis bi goddis lawe & purposen to ende in here feyned deuocion þat is blasphemye to god.

¶ Also bi song þe fend lettith men to studie & preche þe gospel; Singing for siþ mannys wittis ben of certeyn mesure & myȝt, þe more þat þei ben occupied aboute sicke mannus song þe lesse moten þei be sette aboute goddis lawe; for þis stirith men to pride & iolite hinders men from attending to God's law. & lecherie & opere synnys, & so vnableþ hem many gatis to vnderstonde & kepe holy writt þat techeþ mekenesse, mornynge for oure synnys & opere mennus, & stable lif & charite. & ȝit god in all þe lawe of grace chargiþ not sicke song but God orders not such song. deuocion in herte, trewe techynge & holy spekyng in tonge, & goode werkis & holy lastynge in charite & mekenesse; but mannus folly & pride stieþ vp euere more & more in þis veyn nouelrie. First men ordeyned songe of mornynge whanne þei weren in prison, for techynge of þe gospel, as ambrose &² men seyn, to Ambrose. putte away ydelnesse & to be not vnoccupied in goode manere for þe tyme; & þat songe & oure³ acordiþ not, for oure stirith to iolite & pride, & here stirith to mornynge & to dwelle lenger in wordis of goddis lawe. þan were matynys & masse & euen song, placebo & dirige & comendacion & matynes of oure lady ordeyned of synful men, to be songen wiþ heiȝe crynges Singing hinders understanding of the words, and to lette men fro þe sentence & vnderstondynge of þat þat was þus songen, & to maken men wery & vndisposid to studie goddis lawe for akyng of hedis: & of⁴ schort tyme þanne gives head-aches. weren⁵ more veyn iapis founden; deschaunt, countre note & orgon & smale brekynges, þat stirith veyn men to daunsynge more þan to⁶ mornynge, & here-fore ben many proude & lecherous lorelis founden & dowid wiþ temperal & worldly lordischipis & gret cost. but þes foolis schulden drede þe scharpe wordis of austyn, þat seiþ: as oft as þe song likiþ me Austyn. more þan doþ þe sentence þat is songen, so oft I confesse þat I synne greuously. ¶ And ȝif þes knackeris excusen hem bi song in þe olde lawe; seiþ þat crist, þat best kepte þe olde lawe as it schulde *be aftirward, tauȝt not ne chargid vs wiþ *[p. 168 MS.]

¹ preisyng X. ² as AA. ³ opere X. ⁴ omitted AA. ⁵ omitted X. ⁶ omitted X.

sich bodely song ne ony of his apostlis, but wiþ deuocion in herte & holy lif & trewe prechyng, & þat is ynowþ & þe beste. but who schulde þanne charge vs wiþ more ouere þe fredom and liȝtnesse of cristis lawe? & ȝif þei seyn þat

The angels sing in heaven. angelis heryen god bi song in heuene; seie þat we kunnen not þat song, but þei ben in ful victorie of here enemys & we ben in perilous bataile,¹ & in þe valeye of wepyng & mornynge; & oure song lettij vs fro betre occupacion & stirij vs to many grete synnes & to forȝete vs self. but oure fleschly peple haþ more lykyng in here bodely eris in sich knackyng & taterynge þan in heryng of goddis lawe, & spekyng

People hire priests for their tricky singing; of þe blisse of heuene, for þei wolen hire proude prestis & oþere lecherous lorelis þus to knacke notis for many markis & poundis; but þei wolen not ȝeue here almes to prestis & children to lerne & to² teche goddis lawe; & þus bi þis nouelrie of song is goddis lawe vnstudied & not kepte, & pride & oþere grete synnys meynthynd. & þes fonnyd lordis & peple gessen to haue more þank of god & to² worschipe hym more in haldynge vp of here owen nouelries wiþ grete cost þan in lernynge & techynge & meynthyng of his lawe & his seruauntis & his ordynaunce. but where is more

In a large choir two or three sing, and the rest look on. disceit in feiþ, hope & charite? for whanne þer ben fourty or fyfty in a queer þre or foure proude & lecherous lorellis schullen knacke þe most deuout seruyce þat noman schal here þe sentence, & alle oþere schullen be doumbe & loken on hem as foolis. & þanne strumpatis & þeuys preisen sire iacke or hobbe & williem þe proude clerk, hou smale þei knacken here notis; & seyn þat þei seruen wel god & holy chirche, whanne þei dispisen god in his face, & letten oþere cristene men of here deuocion & compunccion, & stiren hem to worldly vanyte; & þus trewe seruyce of god is lettid & þis veyn knackyng for oure iolite & pride is preised abouen þe mone.

Ordinal of Salis bury ¶ Also þe ordynalle of salisbury lettij moche prechyng of þe gospel; for folis chargin þat more þan þe maundementis of god & to studie & teche cristis gospel; for ȝif a man faile in

¹ baitale X.² omitted X.

his ordynale men holden þat grete synne & reprouen hym þer-
of faste, but ȝif a preste breke þe hestis of god men chargen made more of
than God's com-
mands. þat litel or nouȝt; & so ȝif prestis seyn here matynes, masse
& euensong affir salisbury vsse, þei hem self & oþere men
demen it is ynowȝ, þouȝ þei neiþer preche ne teche þe hestis of
god & þe gospel. & þus þei wenen þat it is ynowȝ to fulfille
synful mennus ordynaunce & to leue þe riȝtfulleste ordynaunce
of god þat he chargid prestis to performe. but, lord, what
was prestis office ordeyned bi god bifore þat salisbury vss was
maad of proude prestis, coueitous, lecherous * & dronkelewe? *[p. 169 MS.]
where god þat dampneþ alle ydelnesse chargid¹ hem not at
þe full wiþ þe beste occupacion for hem self & oþere men?
hou doren synful folis chargen cristis prestis wiþ so moche Burden of so
many rules,
nouelrie, & euermore cloute more to, þat þei may not frely do
goddis ordynaunce? for þe iewis in þe olde lawe haden not so more than under
the Old Law.
manye seremonyes of sacrifices ordeyned bi god as prestis han
now riȝttis & reulis maade of synful men. And ȝit þe olde
lawe in þes charious customes mosten nedes cesse for fredom
of cristis gospel; but þis fredom is more don awei bi þis
nouelrie þan bi customes of þe olde lawe; & þus many grete
axen where a prest may wiþ-uten dedly synne seie his masse
wiþ-uten matynys; & þei demen it dedly synne, a prest to
fulfille þe ordynaunce of god in his fredom wiþ-oute nouelrie
of synful men, þat lettith prestis fro þe betre occupacion, as
ȝif þei demen it dedly synne to leue þe worse þing² & take
þe betre whanne þei may not do boþe to-gidre. & þus, lord,
þin owen ordynaunce þat þou madist for þi prestis is holden
errour & distroied for þe fonnyd nouelrie of synful foolis, &
in cas of fendis in helle. ¶ But here men moste be war þat Men must not
abuse Christ's
freedom by
sloth.
vnder colour of þis fredom þei ben betre occupied in þe lawe
of god to studie & teche it, & not slouȝ ne ydel in ouermuche
sleep & vanyte & oþer synnes, for þat is þe fendis panter.
¶ See now þe blyndnesse of þes foolis; þei seyn þat a prest may Matins held
more binding
than the mass.
be excused fro seiynge of masse þat god comaundid him self

¹ chargen X.² teching AA.

Work wasted on
service books
that should be
given to bibles.

to þe substance þer-of, so þat he here on. But he schal not be excused but ȝif he seie matynes & euensong him self þat synful men han ordeyned, & þus þei chargen more here owene fyndynge þan cristis comaundement. A lord, ȝif alle þe studie & traueile þat men han now abowte salisbury vss wiþ multitude of¹ newe costy portos, antifeners, graielis, & alle opere bokis weren turned in-to makynge of biblis & in studiynge & techynge þer-of, hou moche schulde goddis lawe be forþered & knowen & kept, & now in so moche it is hyndrid, vnstudied & vnkept. lord, hou schulden riche men ben excused þat costen so moche in grete schapellis & costy bokis of mannus ordynaunce for fame & nobleie of þe world, & wolen not spende so moche aboute bokis of goddis lawe & for to studie hem & teche hem, siþ þis were wiþ-oute comparison betre on alle siddis & lyȝttere & sykerere. but ȝit men þat knowen þe fredom of goddis ordynaunce for prestis to be þe beste wiþ grete sorow of herte seyn here matynes, masse & euensong, whanne þei schulden ellis be betre occupied, last þei sclaundren þe sike conscience of here breþeren þat ȝit knowen not goddis lawe. god brynge þes prestis to þe fredom to studie holy writt, & lyue þer-after, & teche it oper men frely, & to preie as long and as moche as god meueþ *hem þer-to, & ellis turne to opere medeful werkis, as crist & his apostlis diden; & þat þei ben not constreyned to blabre alle day wiþ tonge & grete crynge, as pies & iaies, þing þat þei knowen not & to peiere here owen soule for defaute of wis deuocion & charite.

Men that know
better waste their
time on services
that they may
not cause scandal.

*[p. 170 MS.]

Worldly business
stops priests from
preaching.

Also bysynesse of worldly occupacion of prestis lettith prechyng of þe gospel, for þei ben so besy þer² aboute & namely in herte, þat þei þenken litel on goddis lawe & han no sauour þer-to. ¶ And seyn þat þei don þus for hospitalite & to releue pore men wiþ dedis of charite; but, hou euere men speken, it his for here owen coueitise, & lustful lif in mete & drynk & precious cloþis, & for name of þe world in fedyng of riche men, & litel or nouȝt comeþ frely

¹ & X.

² omitted X.

to pore men þat han most nede. But þes prestis schulden sue Christ's example and his apostles', who would not serve tables. Acts vi. [2].
 crist in manere of lif & trewe techynge; but crist lefte sich occupacion, and his apostlis also, & weren betre occupied in
 holy preiere & trewe techynge of þe gospel; & þis determinacion & ful sentence was ȝouen of alle þe apostlis to-gidre
 whanne þei hadden resceyued þe plenteuous ȝiftis of þe holy gost. Lord! where þes worldly prestis ben wisere þan ben
 alle þe apostlis of crist? it semeth þat þei ben or ellis ¹ þei ben ¹
 fooles. also crist wolde not take þe kyngdom whan þe puple
 wolde haue maad him kyng, as iones gospel telleþ; but if it John vi. [15].
 haade be a prestis ² office to dele aboute þus bodily ³ almes,
 Crist þat coude best haue do þis office wolde haue take þes
 temperal goodis to dele hem among poeuere men; but he
 wolde not do þus, but fley and took no man of þe aposteles Christ fled when the people would have made him king.
 wiþ him, so faste he hiede. lord, where worldly prestis
 kunnen bettere don þis partinge of worldly goodis þan ⁴ ihū
 crist? And ȝif þei seyn þat crist fedde þe puple in desert
 with bodily almes manye þousand, as þe gospel saiþ; þat
 dide crist by miracle to shewe his godhede and to teche prestes
 houȝ þei schulden fede gostly cristene men by goddis word;
 for so dide cristis aposteles and hadde not where-of to do The apostles had not wherewith to give alms.
 bodily almes, whan þei miȝten haue had tresour and iuelis Acts iii. 6.
 y-nowe of kynggis & lordis. Also peter saiþ in dedis of
 apostlis to a pore man þat to him neiþer was gold ne siluer,
 and ȝit he performede wel þe office of a trewe prest; but oure
 prestis ben so bysye aboute worldly occupacioun þat þei semen
 bettere bailyues or reues þan gostly prestis of ihū crist. For Priests now are more like bailiffs.
 what man is so bysy aboute marchaundise and opere worldly
 doyngis as ben preostes, þat shulden ben lyȝt of heuenly lif
 to alle men abouten hem? but certes þei shulde be as bysy
 aboute studyinge of goddis lawe and holy preyer, not of
 famulorum but of holy desires and clene meditacioun of god,
 and trewe techinge of þe gospel, as ben laboreris aboute
 worldly labour for here sustenance; and mucche more bysie

¹⁻¹ omitted X.² apostlis AA.³ bodi X.⁴ of X.

ȝif þei miȝten, for þey ben more holden for to lyue wel, and
 ȝeue¹ ensauple of holi lif to þe puple & trewe techinge of
 holy writ þanne þe people is holden to ȝyue hem dymes or
 offringis or ony bodily almes; and þerfore prestis shulde not
 leue ensauple of good lif & studyinge of holi writ & trewe
 techinge þer-of² for no² bodily almes, ne for worldly goodis,
 ne for sauynge of here bodily lif. and as crist sauede þe
 world by writynge & techinge of foure Euaungelistis, so þe
 The devil's plots. fend casteþ to dampne þe world and prestis for lettynge to
 preche þe gospel by þes foure; by feyned contemplacioun,
 by song, by salisbury vse, & by worldly bysynes of prestis.
 God for his mercy styre þes prestis to preche þe gospel in
 word, in lif, and bewar of sathanas disceitis. Amen.

¹ omitted X.²⁻² ne X.

XI.

THE PATERNOSTER.

THIS tract should be compared with that printed by Mr. Arnold (S. E. W. III. 98), to which it has many points of likeness.

It is not improbable that Wyclif should have written more than one tract in explanation and praise of the Lord's Prayer, since he was never tired of opposing its excellence to the vanity of the church prayers of his day. There is nothing here which enables us to fix either date or authorship with certainty, but I take the tract to be genuine from its close connexion with that which follows, as to which I have scarcely any doubt.

The tract is found only in X. from which it has been copied.

SUMMARY.

The prayer is taken by petitions, each of which is explained, and to each is assigned some special virtue. Finally comes a praise of the prayer and of Christ's goodness in giving it to us.

þis his þe pater noster.

- *[p. 172 MS.] *Oure fadir þat art *in* heuenes, halwid be þi name. þi reume or kyngdom come to þe. be þi wille don *in* herþe as it is doun *in* heuene. ȝeue to vs to-day oure eche dayes bred. & forȝeue to vs oure dettis, þat is oure synnys, as we forȝeuen to oure dettouris, þat is to men þat han synned *in* vs. & lede vs not *in-to* temptacion, but delyuere vs from euyl. amen, so be it. Whanne we seyn, **oure fadir þat art *in* heuenes**, we ben tauȝt to loue eche oþere as breþren of o fadir & o modir bodily, & moche more, siþ god is oure fadir þat made vs of nouȝt; & we ben tauȝt to lyuen *in* mekenesse eche to oþer, & to desire heuenly þingis, as vertues & holy lif, & don alle oure dedis preuyly & apert for þe honour of god & þe blisse of heuene; & so oure lif owiþ to be *in* heuenys be holy desir & lastynge. & þus at þe bigynnynge we moten be meke & *in* charite to alle men, boþe cristene & heþene, & frendis & enemyes, & ellis we ben not worþi to preie þis pater noster. whanne we seyn, halwid be þi name, we preien þat we ben maad holy & stable *in* vertues bi þe holy name of god & his grace & his vertue; þat we ben holy bi grace as oure fadir god is holy of hym self. *in* þis word we axen deuoutly sadnesse of feiþ, wiþ-oute whiche feiþ we may not plese god; & we preien þat alle manere of pride, boþe *in* þouȝt & spekyng & dede & alle manere beryng & countenance, be putt away fro vs, for suche pride makiþ men luciferis children; & þat alle manere verrey mekenessis be grounded *in* vs aȝenst þis pride, for verrey mekenesse makiþ vs goddis children. ¶ whanne we seyn þi kyngdom or reume come to þe, we preien þat alle men & wommen lyuynge *in* þis world þat schullen be sauȝd, & alle þat ben departed come *to þe Blisse of Heuene as soone as god wole, to see þere oure blissed spouse ihū crist, & haue endeles ioie wiþ him & his angelis & seyntis. for alle angelis & men & wommen þat schullen be sauȝd ben goddis kyngdom & holy chirche; &
- We are to love each other as children of one Father.
- 1st petition.
- We pray for holiness
- and meekness.
- 2nd petition.
- *[p. 173 MS.]
- God's kingdom (the Church) consists of all that shall be saved.

oure lord ihū is kyng of þis reume & heed of þis holy
 chirche; & alle þo þat schullen be dampnyd in helle ben
 deuēlis chirche or synagoge, & þe deuēl is here false prince
 & kyng, but rapere her tiraunt. & here we axen trewe hope We pray for hope
 & lastynge to haue þe blisse of heuene, be mercy of oure god
 & bi oure goode lif & endynge in perfit charite. in þis word and charity.
 we preien þat alle cursed enuye & hate be putt away from vs,
 & þat alle brennyng charite to god & oure euene cristene be
 so sadly rotyd in vs þat it faile neuere in þis lif for no þing
 þat may be. ¶ Whanne we seyn, þei wille be don in erþe 3rd petition.
 riȝt as it is in heuene, we preien þat we don þe wille of god
 wiþ-uten any errour & wiþ-uten any cessynge, as blissed
 aungelis don euere in heuene, & þat we don þis wille of god
 wiþ riȝt fulle vnderstondynge, & wiþ grete desir & ioie &
 likynge, & not wiþ heuynesse & grucchyng. ¶ In þis word
 we axen þat in alle þingis oure wille be confermed to goddis
 wille, þat no þing may departe oure wille & oure loue fro
 god, þat is endeles good & riȝtful. ¶ And here we preien
 algatis to geten þe heȝe vertue of charite, with-uten whiche We pray for
charity,
 alle opere þingis ben not worþi to vs to brynge vs to heuene.
 & here we preien þat god kepe vs fro wickid coueitise of
 worldly goodis, þat we offenden not goddis comaundementis and to be kept
from breaking
God's command-
ments.
 ne good conscience, neiþer for wynnynge ne holdynge forþ of
 worldly goodis; for he þat bi brekyng of goddis hestis, as bi
 false sweryngis, false mesures or weiȝtis, or ony sleiȝtte,
 getiþ or holdiþ his neiȝeboris goodis, doþ not goddis wille, but
 is þef & traitour of god & his neiȝeboris bi goddis lawe.
 ¶ Whanne we seyn, ȝeue vs to-day oure eche dayes breed, we 4th petition.
 preien for nedeful sustenaunce of oure body, & for to haue We pray for bodi-
ly sustenance
 vnderstondynge & kepyng of goddis word, & namely of his
 hestis þat ben gostly sustenaunce of oure soule, & þat we han
 þis sustenaunce trewely geten, not by raueyne ne extortion ne honestly got,
 falsnesse, but þat it be spendid in seruyce of god & his drede;
 & þat we þanken mekely oure god for alle his grace & ȝiftis
 þat he ȝeueþ vs of his grete goodnesse. ¶ In þis word we
 preien to haue þe vertue of prudence to knowe whiche and for prudence.

*[p. 174 MS.]
Phil. iii. 19.
5th petition.

We pray for
mercy.

Does not forbid
us to ask for
debts.

We pray for
righteousness.

6th petition.

We pray not to
be overcome by
temptation,

and to have
spiritual
strength.

sustenance is nedeful & resonable to vs, & what we owen to do þerfore to god, & in what mesure we schullen take it, to putte away alle manere glotonye & dronkenesse & coriouste & wast of metis & drynkis; for þis glotonye & dronkenesse makith men to loue more here bely & here golet þan god almyȝtty; *for þei maken here wombe here false god, as seynt poul seiþ. Whanne we seyn, & **for-ȝeue vs oure dettis**, þat is oure synnes, **as we forȝeuen to houre dettouris**, þat is to men þat han trespassed aȝenst vs, we¹ preien þat god haue mercy on vs as we han mercy on hem þat han wraþhid vs. certis ȝif we han no mercy on hem þat trespassen aȝenst vs, we preien god aȝenst oure owene heed þat he dampne vs for oure synnys. but here men moten forȝeue þe rancour, hate & euyl wille of here herte to here neiȝeboris, but þei may lawefully pursue worldly dette, so þat þei do þis bi iuste menes, & kepe pacience & charite; & ȝif men ben pore & iust of lif & wolden fayn paie, & traueile bisily þerfore in treuþe, & ben not wastouris of here litil good, þanne þis preiere wole þat siche² pore ben not prisonyd ne peyned, but bi pacience & mercy suffer til þei may paie. In þis word³ we preien to haue þe vertue of riȝtwisnesse to putten out vnresonable wraþþe & vengauce, & holden vs sadde in verrey mercy & pacience aȝenst malencolie & puttynge away of reson, so þat reson & mercy reule welle alle oure stiringis of herte & speche & doyng. Whanne we seyn, & **ne lede vs not in-to temptacion**, we preien þat god suffre vs not bi wiȝdrawyng of his grace & helpe be ouercomen in temptacions of þe deuyll, of þe world, & of þe fleschly lustis or foule delectacions. for it is profitable to be temptid & wiȝ-stonde þe temptacions bi helpe of god & his angelis, for þere is oure mede & ioie restorid; but it is euyl to ben ouercomen in þis temptacion, & þat schal not be but be oure owene negligence & slouȝte & fals likyng in synne. þerfore in þis word we preien to haue þe vertue of gostly strengþe, to be strong bi

¹ MS. he.

² MS. whiche.

³ MS. world.

helpe of þe holy gost aʒenst alle temptacions, & þat we ben
 not hardid *in synne*, but þat we waken in holy preieris &
 good occupacion, & haue saad mynde of þe schortnesse of
 lykyng *in synne*, & on þe bittre peynes of purgatorie & helle;
 & ʒif we wolen, bi þis mynde & occupacion siþ goddis grace
 & helpe is redy, we schullen ouercomen alle oure temptacions
 & gete oure corone *in heuene* wiþ-uten ende. ¶ Whanne we
 seyn, **but delyuere vs fro euyl**, we preien þat god delyuere ^{7th petition.}
 vs from alle euyl of synne & payne boþe of body & soule *in* <sup>We pray to be
saved from sin
and pain,</sup>
 þis lif & in purgatorie¹ & namely fro payne of helle, & þat
 we falle not *in-to* dispeir of goddis mercy for olde rotyng &
 custome *in synne*. In þis word we preien to haue þe vertue <sup>and to have
temperance.</sup>
 of temperaunce, to take so worldly goodis & myrþe þat we
 forʒeten not god *in heuenly blisse*, & þat we tempere so þe
 stiryngis of oure fleisch þat we delen not fleischly wiþ ony
 woman but ʒif it be *in verrey* & laweful *matrimonye; & *in* * [p. 175 MS.]
 drede of god, & not as bestis wiþ-uten reson, þat ben alle
 seit abouten here lustis & forʒeten god & alle his werkis.
 for þe archangel raphael tauʒte tobie þat þe deuyl haþ power ^{Tobit. vi. 17.}
 ouer sicke men þat þus defoulen þe ordre of matrimonye &
 don al for here lustis & forʒeten god & his drede & don as
 bestis wiþ-oute discrecion. ¶ God delyuere vs from alle euyl of
 synne preuy & apert, & namely fro enduryng *in synne* &
 dispeir of goddis mercy, & fro bodely werris & vengauce &
 peynes, boþe *in þis lif* & purgatorie & helle; & graunt vs bi
 riht feiþ trewe & perfit charite to gete heuenely blisse. so be it
 ihū for þi grete mercy. ¶ Certis þis pater noster passiþ alle <sup>Excellence of the
Paternoster.</sup>
 oþere preieris *in auctorite*, in sotilte & profit boþe of soule &
 body. It is of most auctorite; for oure lord ihū crist, god &
 man, made it & comaundid cristene men to seie it; but oþere
 preieris ben made bi men, & enclosen noon oþer sentence
 þan doþ þis pater noster, but ʒif it be errour. þerfore as ihū
 crist is more worþi þan oþere synful men, so þis pater noster
 is of more auctorite þan is preiere maad of oþere men, þouȝ
 here preiere be good. þis pater noster is more sotil þan

¹ Scored through in MS.

oþere preieris ; for it is maad of endeles wisdom & charite of crist, & encloseþ alle þinkyngis þat ben nedful boþe for body & soule in þis world & þe toþer ; & oure lord ihū made it in schorte wordis & moche witt, for men schulden not be heuy ne excusen hem fro kunnyng & seiynge þer-of. it is of most profit, for ȝif a man seie it wel he ne schal faile no þing þat is nedful & profitable for bodily lif & vertuous, to brynge men to heuene & haue blisse in body & soule wiþ-oute ende. lord, hou moche ben þei to blame þat bisien hem aboute preieris maade of synful men & leuen þis pater noster þat is best & most hesy of alle, & comprehendþ alle goodis for body & soule. blissed be þis endeles goode lord, þat of his endeles wisdom & charite tauȝte þis schorte preiere. Amen.

XII.

THE AVE MARIA.

I HAVE no doubt of the genuineness of this tract. The tone and manner are Wyclif's, and the invective against the frivolity of the gentry suits better a man who had lived at court than one of the obscure poor preachers. Besides the general style there is one passage which bears a special mark of Wyclif. On page 208 we are told, "God the Trinity is with each creature . . . to keep it; for else it should turn to naught." The belief of the immanence of God in all created things is one which Wyclif held firmly. (Cf. *Cum ergo in qualibet creatura est Trinitas increata.—Trial*, iv. 27.) The doctrine was brought into popular use in his latest controversies on the Eucharist, but used as it is here, in a different connexion and incidentally, it is a sign of the hand of the master rather than one of his pupils.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the MS. A. 4. 12., at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, which I have distinguished in the notes as SS.

SUMMARY.

How this invocation is made up, and the lesson from it.	.....	p. 204
The evil of women who are given to vanity.	.....	204
Prevalence of frivolity among gentlefolk.	.....	205
Gross amusements at Christmas.	.....	206
The bad spirit prevalent in courts.	.....	207
How God was with Mary and is in men.	.....	208

þis is þe aue maria.

How this invocation is made up.

Luke i. 28.

Luke i. 42.

*[p. 176 MS.]
Indulgences.

Heil ¹be þou,¹ marie, ful of grace, þe lord is wiþ þe. blissed be þou among wymmen, & blissed be þe fruyt of þi wombe, ihū crist.² amen. so be it. þe arcangel gabriel sent of god grette oure ladie seynte marie wiþ þes wordis, heil. be þou ful of grace. þe lord is wiþ þe. blissed be þou among wymmen. & he seide no moo wordis, as þe firste³ gospel of seynt luk techiþ,⁴ but elizebeth, þe modir of seynt ion baptist, seide þes wordes to oure lady whanne sche hadde conseyued crist; blissed be þou among wymmen & blissed be þe fruyt of þi wombe. as þe same gospel techiþ⁴; but cristene men for deuocion adden to þes tweie wordis, marie & ihū crist; * & men seyn þat popis graunte moche pardon þerfore, but hou euere it be of pardon, þis addynge to is trewe, for þe gospel techiþ⁴ vs þes names & þei stiren men to deuocion. ¶ Here men & wommen, & namely gentil wommen, schulden lerne⁵ mekenesse, chastite, charite, sobirnesse & schamefastenesse, to be aschamyd of eche euyl speche, & namely of lecherie & euyl contenaunce of synne & ribaudrie & vilonye⁶ and⁷ lerne holy deuocion, & þanne þei worschipe wel ihū here gostly spouse & seynt marie his modir; & ȝif þei lyuen in pride of herte for nobeleie of blood or⁸ kyn & rentis & richessis of þe world, & han indignacion and⁹ dispit of oþere pore men or wymmen; ¹⁰and delyten hem¹⁰ in lecherie in ony degree; or in hate & enuye or glotonye & dronkenesse & boldnesse in synne, & colouren & meynntenen it and lyuen in riot, daunsynge & lepyng in nyȝttis & slepen out of reson on þe morwe, & forȝeten god & his drede & deuocion of preieris; what euere here tonge blabre, here euyl lif blasphemeth & dispisiþ boþe ihū here noble spouse & his modir marie, tresour of clennesses & deuocion. ¶ And ȝif þei

Evil life blasphemes Jesus and Mary.

¹ omitted SS.

⁴ telliþ SS.

⁷ omitted X.

² omitted SS.

⁵ lyuen al in SS.

⁸ & X.

⁹ omitted X.

³ omitted SS.

⁶ vilenþe X.

¹⁰⁻¹⁰ omitted X.

maken hem more bisi in herte & dede to be ¹gaie and costelewe of array ¹ of cloþis & keuerchers and perlis & ribanys, or sicke vanytes, to maken here body fresch and ²likynge to mennus eizen to coueiten hem, þan to gete vertues in here soule to make it fair to þe holy trinyte & to ihū here worþieste spouse, þei ben out of charite, & þe deuelis panter, to kacche men in-to synne of lecherie & many moo synnes ³ & holde hem þer-inne, til sathanas drawe hem boþe in ²-to helle; & what euere nobleie or dignyte þat ³þei han in þis world, be þei gentil men or wymmen, for þis cursed lif þei ben cherlis or bonde wymmen of synne, & fendis of helle, & gostly spouse brekeris or avoutreris, & lemmans of foule sathanas þat is foulere þan ony mesel or leprous in þis world. & but ȝif þei amenden hem in þis world ⁴ þei schullen be of hem þat god spekiþ of in iobis bok. ⁵ ¶ Þei leden, seiþ god, here daies in lustful goodis & myrþis of þis world & in a poynt of tyme fallen down in-to helle. sumtyme curtesie & genterie was vertuose ⁶ lif & honest in word & dede & alle manere of good ⁷ berynge, & suster of holynesse; but now it is turned in-to vanyte & nysete & knackis & iapis & is ȝate of synne, of pride, of rebaudrie, sleuþe, coueitise, glotonye, dronkenesse & lecherie & meyntenynge of synne & hordam, ⁸ of wraþþe & enuye & bost & cursed swerynge & wast of goodis & robbynge of pore men ⁹ & distroiyng of londis & good cristendom. ⁹ ¶ O ȝe gentil wommen, þenkiþ hou noble wommen & clene & stedefast han be bifore ȝou, as oure lady seynt marie, marie magdaleyne, sussanne, katerine, margare, anneys, ¹⁰ cicile * & many moo, & take what goode ensauple ȝe may of here mekenesse & holynesse; for whanne wymmen ben turnyd fully to goodnesse ful ¹¹ hard it is þat ony man passe hem in goodnesse. And as ¹² hard it ¹² is ¹² þat ony man passe hem in synne whanne þei ben turnyd to pride & lecherie & dronke-

Women who care more for fine clothes than virtues are the devil's snare.

Job xxi. 13.

Courtesy and gentility are now degraded.

Gentlewomen should think on the example of the saints.

*[p. 177 MS.]

When women are good it is hard for men to be better, and it is hard for a man to pass them in wickedness when bad.

¹-¹ gaie in costelewe array X. ² in X. ³ omitted X.

⁴ lyfe SS.

⁵ þe bok of iob SS. ⁶ vertues X.

⁷ omitted X.

⁸ hord X.

⁹-⁹ omitted SS.

¹⁰ margarete, agnes SS.

¹¹ omitted X.

¹² omitted X.

Young women
may sometimes
dance.

Gross amuse-
ments at Christ-
mas.

Too much care
given to the body
and its adorn-
ment.

Noblemen should
repress swearing
and loose talk in
their presence.

nesse. I gesse wel þat þonge wymmen may sumtyme daunsen¹ in mesure to haue recreacion and liȝtnesse, so þat þei haue þe more þouȝt on myrþe in heuene & drede more & loue more god þer-by, & synge honeste songis of cristis incarnacion, passion, resurexion & ascencion, & of þe ioies of oure ladi, & to dispise synne & preise vertue in alle here doynge²; but nowe he þat kan best pleie a pagyn³ of þe deuyl, syngynge songis of lecherie, of batailis and⁴ of lesyngis, & crie as a wood man & dispise goddis maieste & swere bi herte, bonys & alle membris of crist, is holden most merie mon⁴ & schal haue most þank of pore & riche; & þis is clepid worschipe of þe grete solempnyte of cristismasse; & þus for þe grete kyndenesse & goodnesse þat crist dide to men in his incarnation⁵ we dispisen hym more in outrage of pride, of glotonye, lecherie & alle manere harlotrie. & bi þis doynge þe fend bryngeþ in iolite of body & myrþe & likynge & newe fyndynge vp of synne, in-stede of holynesse & gostly ioie & herynge of god for his endeles charite, mercy, mekenesse & kyndenesse. lord, where is þat man or womman þat makip hym so bisi to make his soule fair in vertues⁶ to goddis siȝtte as he makip hym bisi aboute atir of body for þe siȝtte of men? Alas, þat so gret cost & bisynesse is sette abouten þe roten body, þat is wormes mete & a sak of drit & dust & aschis; but aboute þe soule made to þe ymage of þe trinyte, & þe whiche soule crist bouȝte so dere wiþ his precious herte blood, is no bisynesse to clense it out⁷ of synne but to brynge it in-to more synne boþ nyȝt & day. litel þenk þes woode men & wommen on cristis pouert & cold & pouert of his modir & what lif he lyuede in þis world in so gret penaunce & dispit & wepynge for oure synnys & what schameful deþ he suffrid at þe laste. þes lordis & ladies schulden suffre in here presence & courtis no dispisyng of god bi wood⁸ swerynge, bi wordis of lecherie, ny⁹ oþere rebaudrie and vnresonable

¹ playen hem SS.

⁴ omitted X.

⁷ ones SS.

² cunnyng SS.

⁵ carnacion X.

⁸ oþes SS.

³ pagent SS.

⁶ vertuose X.

⁹ be X.

speche; for ȝif þei suffreden ony of here *seruauntis* to dispise
 oure erþely kyng moche ponyschyng schulde come ¹to hem¹
 & þei ben holden false & traitour² to þe kyng. o hou moche
 more traitours & false ben þes worldly lordis³ to crist kyng of
 alle heuene & alle erþe & helle, whanne þei heren sich dispit
 don to his maieste & refreynen not here *seruauntis* þer-of.
certis ensauple of clenness, honeste & holynesse cam sum-
 tyme *fro lordis courtis to þe comyns, & þan was holy lif in *[p. 178 MS.]
 worschipe among pore & riche. But now comeþ ensauple of Courts set a bad
 pride, glotonye, lecherie & hal harlotrie fro lordis courtis to þe example to the
 comyns. And here-fore regneþ synne in alle manere peple commons.
 wiþ-uten schame. þus þe fend blyndiþ men to clepe þis
 cursed hauntyng of arlotrie & synne gret worschipe of god,
 & to clepe deuocion of preieris & sade mynde of cristis pouert,
 penaunce & deþ & of þe day of dome ypocrisie & folie; &
 suche men ben not worþi to dwelle in lordis courtis, laste þei Good men not
 dryuen away þe deuyt & his scole of synne & vanyte to allowed to live in
 courtis.
 displesyng⁴ of ȝonge, nyce folis, & bryngen in crist in-to
 cristen⁵ mennus soulis & his⁶ scole of vertues & honeste in
 þouȝt, worde & dede, to⁷ plesyng of god & sauynge of
 mennus soulis. ¶ Heil marie, þat is wel be to þe, marie; or
 ioie be to þe. for bi⁸ þat womman⁸ eue cam sorowe, peyne & Eve brought sor-
 woo to mankynde for sche tristed not sadly to goddis word row to men,
 but tristed to þe fendis gabbyng & coueited ouermoche
 kunnyng & dingnyte; but bi sad bileue & mekenesse &
 charite of marie cam ioie & saluacion to mankynde, for her Mary brought
 bi sche conseyuade crist as þe gospel seiþ. þerfore flee joy.
 lesyngis & pride & holde sadly bileue of goddis word with
 mekenesse & charite & þou schalt haue part of maries⁹ ioie &
 blisse of heuene eueremore. marie cristis modir was ful of
 grace. seynt steuene was ful of grace, as holy writt seiþ, Acts vi. 8.
 but lasse þan oure lady, & oure swete lord ihū was ful of
 grace aboue steuene & oure ladi þer-to. & so þer ben þre

¹⁻¹ omitted X. ² as false traitours SS.³ omitted X.⁴ dispisyng SS. ⁵ omitted X.⁶ usen SS.⁷ in X.⁸⁻⁸ omitted X.⁹⁻⁹ blessyng & þe SS.

God is in all
creatures,

but in good men
by grace,

and in angels by
showing himself
clearly.

degrees of plente of grace. þe leste of þis plente was in steuene, þe mydil in oure lady, but þe most in oure lord ihū crist. ¶ God þe trinyte is wiþ eche creature bi myȝt, wisdom & goodnesse to kepe it, for ellis it schulde turne to noȝt; but god is wiþ goode men of vertuous lif bi grace to approue & accepte here doynge & helpe hem þer-inne, to rewarde hem in blisse þerfore, & dwelliþ in here soulis as his owen temple, & makiþ hem ioifully dwelle in his seruyce & suffre¹ gladly alle dispitis & persecucion for his name; but god is in angelis & seyntis in heuene bi clier schewynge of his godhed to hem & makynge hem to knowe alle þingis & haue alle þat euere þei desiren wiþ-outen ony anoye or peyne. ¶ Blissed be þou among wymmen; þat is more þan ony oþer womman, for noon oþer was so sad in bileue ne so meke ne so chast ne so goode in alle manere holynesse & namely in brennynge charite. ȝif þou wilt haue part of maries blisse & goddis blissynge sue marie in þis holy lif &² namely in þes seuene, feiþ, hope, & charite, & mekenesse, chastite, sobirnesse, & brynnynge desir of riȝtwisnesse. And blissed be þe fruyt of þi womb: þat is ihū, for bi his mercy & grace comeþ alle goodnesse, & namely bi his trewe techynge & wilful deþ & endeles myȝt, be whiche he schal reise alle men at domes day & ȝif blisse of heuene in bodi & soule to þo þat ende in perfit charite. god ȝeue vs grace to þenke on cristis mercy & riȝtwisnesse & maries sadnesse in bileue, & mekenesse to make ende in perfit charite. Amen.

¹ suffriþ X.

² in X.

XIII.

HOW SATAN AND HIS CHILDREN, ETC.

THE tiresome series of antitheses between Christ and the fiend with which this tract begins are in Wyclif's worst manner, if indeed they are his.

The characteristic point of this tract is its insistence on the hardships of imprisonment for debt, on the cruelty of those who inflict it unjustly, (pp. 211 and 214), and on the folly of those who fall into it through drunkenness (p. 217). I do not remember any other tract in which this point is pressed so much.

Whoever the author was, he knew the poor and felt for them; notice, among other things, his description of the bed-ridden poor as couching on muck or dust (p. 211), and his complaint that the aged poor had to drink water and fell into fevers. (Did he look upon wine as a febrifuge?)

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA., where the first chapter and part of the second are wanting.

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	The works of bodily mercy are enumerated, and the perversions of them prevalent among bad priests, etc.	.....	.....	.....	p. 210
II.	Contains a similar list of contrasts as to the works of spiritual mercy				212
III.	The temptations offered us by the five senses are enumerated and contrasted with the right use of the senses.	.....	.....	.....	216

Hou sathanas & his children turnen werkis of mercy
vpsodom & disceyuen men *per-inne* & in here fyue
wittis.

Capitulum primum.

*[179 MS.]
Christ orders us
to feed the poor;
the devil teaches
us to make feasts
for the rich,

and to give them
wine and spiced
ale,

and to let the sick
poor drink water.

Christ teaches us
to clothe the
naked; the devil
teaches to waste
rich clothes on
vagabonds.

Men of religion
spend the money
of the poor on
adorning horses
and vestments.

They wastemoney
in decorating
images.

Christ teaches to
give shelter to
the poor;

*First crist comaundiþ men of power to fede hungry pore
men; þe fend & his techen to make costy festis & waste
many goodis on lordis & riche men & to suffre pore men
sterue & perische for hunger & oþere myscheuys; ȝe, men
þat feynen hem ful of charite & religion gadren propre
goodis to hem seluen & festen delicatly lordis & ladies &
riche men & suffre here pore breþren begge for meschef &
fare ful harde. crist comaundiþ to ȝeue drynk to þrusty men
& wymmen; þe fend & his techen to purueye heiȝ wyn &
spised ale & strong for riche men & lordis to make hem
dronken & chide & fiȝtte & forȝete god & his lawe, & to suffre
pore þat han nouȝt of here owene & may not labore for
febilnesse or sikenesse & blyndenesse drynke water & falle in
feueris or ellis perische. crist comaundiþ to cloþe nakyd men
& wymmen whanne þei han nouȝt of here owene; *per-to* þe
fend & his techen to ȝeue costly cloþis & manye to riche men
& mynstralis or shaualdours for worldly name, & suffre pore
men haue nakid sidis & schakyngge lippis & hondis for cold
þat woo is hem wiþ þe lif. ȝe, prelatiſ & men of singuler
religion, þat taken þe charge to ben procuratouris & dis-
penderis of pore mennus liflode, cloþen fatte horsis & gaie
sadlis & bridlis & mytris & croceris wiþ gold & siluer &
precious stonys & suffren pore men & children perische for
cold; & ȝit þes prelatiſ & newe religious comen in staat of
cristis pouert & his apostlis, & techen & crien þat what euere
þei han is pore mennus goode. ȝit riche men cloþen¹ dede
stockis & stonys wiþ precious cloþis, wiþ gold & siluer &
perlis & gaynesse to þe world, & suffren pore men goo sore
a cold & at moche meschefe. Crist techiþ to herbwre pore
men þat han non houses ne peny to peye for here innys; þe

¹ closen MS.

fend & his techen to herberwe riche men & lordis wiþ gret cost & deyitte for worldly worschipe, & suffre pore men wander in stormys & slepe wiþ þe swyn, & many tymes suffre not hem come wiþ-inne here ȝatis, & to fynde many excusacions & coloure þis doynge. ȝe, ypocritis of priuat religion maken grete houses & costly & gaely peyntid *more þan kyngis & lordis bi sotil beggynges & confessions & trentalis & meynutenynge of synne, [and] herberewe lordis & riche men & namely ladies, & suffre pore men lie wiþ-uten or geten houslewth at pore men or ellis perische for wedris & cold.

the devil teaches to entertain rich men grandly.

The religious build great houses.

*[p. 180 MS.]

¶ Crist techiþ to visite sike men & counforte hem & helpe hem of sustenaunce; þe fend & his techen to visiten riche men, lordis & ladies in here prosperite & lykynges to be holden kynde & curteis, & to counforte eche oþer in synne & to haue lustis of glotonye, lecherie & oþere schrewidnessis, but of pore men þat ben beddrede & couchen in muk or dust is litel þouȝt on or noȝt. ¶ ȝit ypocritis of feyned religion visiten not fadirles children & modirles & widewis in here tribulacion & kepe not hem self vnblekid fro þis world, as seynt iame techiþ: but visete oft riche men & wymmen, & namely riche widewis, for to gete worldly muk by false disceitis & carien it home to caymes castelis & anticristis couent & sathanas children & marteris of glotonye. ¶ Crist techiþ to visite men in prison & helpe to delyuere hem in good manere & counforte hem bi almes ȝeuynges; þe fend & his presonen pore men for dette whanne þei ben not at power to paie, & traueile nyȝt & day & lyuen ful harde, & to lyue wiþ treweþe & susteynen¹ wif & children, & on hem is no mercy. ȝit feyned religious men pursuen pore prestis to prison & to brennynges bi many cursed lesyngis & sclaundrynges priue & apert, for as mochel as þei prechen trewly & frely cristis gospel & goddis hestis & reprouen here ypocrisie, symonye, coueitise & oþere disceitis; & ȝit þes ypocritis blenden lordis & prelatis to enprisone sicke pore prestis techynge þe treweþe bi comaundement & ensauple of crist & his apostlis, not-wiþstondynge

Christ teaches to visit the sick; the devil teaches to pay visits of ceremony to the prosperous.

Friars as bad as any.

James i. 27.

Christ teaches to visit men in prison;

the devil and his imprison for debt men who do their best to pay.

False religious persecute poor priests.

¹ susteynem MS.

Burial of the dead.

Religious fight for the "carriage" of rich men, but will make no room for the poor.

*[p. 181 MS]

þat lordis & prelatys ben charged vp payne of dampnacion to helpe hem & meyntene þis trewe & prechouris of it.

¶ It is holden a werk of mercy to birie dede men after þe techynge of goddis lawe; þe fend techiþ worldly riche men, clerkis & religious, to make solempnyte whanne riche men ben dede wiþ dirige & messis & wax & rengynge & grete festis, but whanne pore men ben dede vnneþe wole ony man berie hem or seie derige or masse. ȝit feyned religious wolen come to riche mennus dirige in grete multitude & stire hem to be biried in here chirche, & stryuen & fiȝtten for þe dede careyne for loue of offrynge & worldly honour, but pore men schullen not lie among hem þouȝ þei axen it neuere so faste for charite. & þus in stede of werkis of bodely mercy & charite is comen in ypocrisie of worldly name & couetise & norischynge *of synne & sotil excusynge þer-of, & euyl is clepid good & good euyl.

Capitulum 2^m.

Christ says we should teach God's commandments;

the devil teaches tricks of money-getting,

and stirs up patrons to give cures to men who are foolish and worldly.

A poor wretch of a curate looks after the parish,

Werkis of mercy ben worse turned vpsodoun. crist seiþ it is a souereyn werk of mercy & charite to teche vnlernd men þe riȝte weie to heuene, þat is þe gospel & goddis comaundementis; þe fend & his seyn it is grete charite to teche ȝonge men & oþere sotil craftis & nedeles & queynte sleiȝtis to disceyue schepische men of worldly goodis & make hem self riche & bostful & proude. & þe fend bi sotil menys of ypocrisie & symonye stireþ lordis & myȝtty men to make an ydiot & fool curatour of cristene soulis, þat neiþer may ne kan ne wole, for his opyn synne & worldly lif & ignoraunce of holy writt & negligence & worldly vanyte & drede of worldly shame & loos, teche hem goddis lawe, ne suffre oþere to teche hem frely & trewely wiþ-uten flaterynge for drede last his owene falsnesse be knowen; & ȝit þes cursed auaunsynge is clepid charite to helpe þus a pore man. But an ydiot & a lecherous wrecche schal be sett to kepe þe soulis for litel pris, & þe more lorel goo on haukyng & huntyng,

& *serue* in lordis courtis, in worldly offices, & þe deuyl drawiþ while the bigger rascal (his rector) goes hunting.
 wiþ his helpis alle þat he may to helle & þis is clepid mercy & charite; but þis deuylis charite puttiþ oute charite & loue of god & bryngiþ in loue of money & synne & hate of vertues & cristene soulis. crist seiþ it is werk of mercy to conseile at perti hou a man schal best lyue in þis or þis special poynt. þe fend & his seyn it is mercy & charite to conseile men to holde forþ craftis þat þei vsen aʒenst here conscience & excusen hem bi almes, as masse syngyng & makynge of needles houses & costy. & whanne clerkis schullen conseile lordis & oþere men hou þei may best *serue* god & saue here soulis in here a-staat, þis conseil is turned in-to worldly wisdom as bilydunge of castellis & arraiynge of housholde in lond of pees & of werre. & whanne it [is] reserued to þe holy gost to ʒeue vtterly conseil in special poyntis þat ben not expresly comaundid ne forboden in holy writt, worldly clerkis ful of pride, symonye, coueitise & oþere synnys ʒeuen fulbut conseil aʒenst þe holy gost & aʒenst þe helpe of þe soule for here owene pride & coueitise; & þus conseil of þe holy gost & profit of soulis¹ is putt bihynde & conseil of þe world & þe fleisch & of sathanas is putt forþ. god biddiþ þat lordis & souereyns schulden in resonable manere chastise here sugetis, *seruauntis* & children whanne þei trespassen opynly in word or dede aʒenst goddis comaundementis; þe fend & his techen þat suggettis & *seruauntis* ben cruely beten, pyned, prisoned & sumtyme hangid & drawen for worldly trespas & defaute of here **seruyce* doynge, & vnreuerence aʒenst worldly souereyns, but of trespas & dispit of god & his lawe no charge but mirþe² & liynge & iapyng. worldly prelati of anticrist seyn þat lordis schullen chastise here sugetis of worldly causes, but not of lecherie ne pride ne forswerynge, be it neuere so opyn, for þat longeþ to iurdiccion of prelati; neþeles ʒif þei han money of þes lecherous þeues þei schullen lie in here cursed synne fro ʒeer to ʒeer, ʒe be al here lif ʒif

Instead of giving true advice, the devil's children let a man make up for sin by alms.

The devil teaches men to ill-treat subjects and servants.

*[p. 182 MS.]

Worldly prelates forbid rulers to punish lechery and perjury.

Sin-rents.

¹ AA begins here, the first part of the tract being lost.

² myþe X.

Ill-treatment of
the poor.

The clergy curse
those who cannot
pay tithes, and
the friars beg
from those who
have nothing for
themselves.

God teaches to
forgive wrongs
and ill will ;

the devil teaches
revenge.

þei paien moche & redily. clerkis seyn þat lordis ben *cursed* ȝif þei chastisen hem, þouȝ þei ben neuere so foule lecherous & neuere so cursed heretikis, for symonye & coueitise & meynutenynge of synne & robbynge¹ pore tenauntis bi extorcions for *anticristis* correccions & veyn halwynge of chirchis & auteris & oþere iapis. ¶ lord, soone & esely schulde synne be hurlid oute of lond ȝif lordis wolden in al here wille, al here witt & power dispise synne & synful wrecchis, & preise & meyntene *vertue* & *vertuous* men; & certis þei ben holden her-to vp peyne of dampnacion, for ellis þei failen in mercy & charite. god techiþ it is mercy to counforten men fallen in myschif & disese. þe² fend & his techen þat it is almes to pursuen men³ to prisonynge & exilynge whanne þei ben brouȝt doun bi sodeyne loos, as brennyng & robbyng, for riche men beren hem on honde þat it is for here synne & mysreulyng of hem self, & ellis oþere broþelis wolden renne away wiþ riche mennus good, & þer-fore þei schulden be seet in strong prison til þei perische for hungur & myschef & dispeiren & grucchen aȝenst god; & þus for loue of rotyn dritt þei don þat is in hem to dampne many soulis. ȝit worldly clerkis cursen for dymes & offryngis, þouȝ men ben ful pore & þei don no þing here offis, & veyn religious cessen not to begge & craue of pore men, þouȝ here rente be bihynde & here werk⁴ bestis in distresse & wif & childe hungry & nakyd, & so þei bryngen hem in-to more myschif & counforten hem not but bi lesyngis & ⁵ fals grauntynge of gostly helpe, þat is not in here power but only in goddis⁶ delynge. ¶ God techiþ þat it is mercy to forȝeue trespassis & wrongis don aȝenst men hem self & algatis rancor & ewil wille of herte; þe fend & his seyn þat it is manlynese & riȝtwisnesse & almes to betyn gadlyngis & be vengid on hem þat don hem wrong, for ellis þeues & lorellis wolden ouerrenne hem & here sugetis wolden not drede hem; but comynly þis chastysynge is don bi pride, coueitise & out of charite. & þouȝ lordis & grete men wynn

¹ robben AA.

⁴ wreck X.

² omitted X.

⁵ of X.

³ omitted X.

⁶ goode X.

herby worldly name & temperal goodis, þei lesen charite & here soule þat ben worþi a þousand *fold betre þan alle erþely •[p. 183 MS.] tresour. ¶ God seiþ it is mercy & charite to suffre men mekely & wisly whanne þei ben out of reson as wroþ & malencolious; þe fend & his seyn þat þis is¹ couwardise & leesyng of worldly name & boldyng of euyl doeris; & þerfore for o schrewed word a man mot quyte anoþer or moo, & so of euyl dedis comeþ hate & strif, & fiȝttinge & pledyng be reised & witt & reson & charite exilid, & many men perischid in bodi & soule. god comaundiþ vs to loue oure enemys of oure herte & doo good to men þat hatip² vs & preie for men þat pursuen vs wrongfully & falsly; þe deuyl & his seyn þat it is riȝtful to hate oure enemys & don heuyl & harm to hem þat haten vs & falsly pursuen vs, & axe vengauce of oure enemys & false pursueris, for ellis we schullen norische oure enemys in here synne & ouerrenne vs & distroie vs, oure wifis & children & goodis, & þerfore we willen defende vs þe while þat we may. trewe men seyn to þe fend & his disciplis þat ȝif we kepen goddis hestis oure god wole fiȝten for vs & maken oure enemys afferd, & bi oure goode pacience & charite & herty preiynge for oure enemys³ þei schulden be goddis grace cesse of here wrong & turne to pees & charite; & þis is liȝttere & betere þan to conquere al þe erþe bi dynt of swerid. & ȝif oure enemys ben endurid in synne, as was pharaao, oure godde wolde ordeyne þe beste for vs boþe for body & soule ȝif we kepen mekenesse, pacience & charite; & siþ werris comen to men for synnys let men leue here cursed synne & god of mercy & pees wole ȝeue vs reste & pees of alle erþely enemyes. bi þes cautelis & many moo the fend & his disciplis distroien werkis of mercy & fallen in-to loos of þingis þat þei coueiten mochel & in-to endelis myschefes þat þei wolen to askape, for þei wolen not be reulid bi goddis lawe & reson but bi hire wille, & þerfore alle þingis schal turne aȝenst hem at þe laste.

God bids us love
our enemies;

the devil says
that we should
hate them.

We should trust
that God will
fight for us.

¹ omitted X.

² haten AA.

³ synnys AA.

Capitulum 3^m.

The devil makes
our five senses
means of sin. ȝit þe fend disceyueþ men bi here fyue wittis & makeþ
Sight is used by
the devil to stir up hem menys to synne where þei schulden be menys to *vertue*
lust, &¹ good *gouernale* of men: first he² stirip men to seen
covetousness. vanyte of þis world & setten here herte *þer-onne* & forȝeten
god & his werkis; also he stirip men to see faire wymmen,
& bryngip mynde of hem & greet likyng of lecherie *in-to*
mennus hertis til þei consenten to synne & fulfillen it *in*
dede. ¶ Also whanne men seen lordischipis of þis world &
precious iuelis & gold & siluer, faire hors & scheep & oþere
goodis, þe fend stireþ hem to desire hem vnskillfully & sette
more here herte on hem þan on *vertues* & blisse of heuene;
& þanne þei fallen *in-to* pride & coueitise & oþere synnys.
*[p. 184 MS.] but men schulden see *goddis werkis, as heuene & erþe, &
goddis creaturis & herbi knowen þe myȝt, þe wytt & good-
nesse of þe lord þat made alle þingis of not, & drede hym
ouer alle þingis & loue him ouer alle creaturis. ¶ Whanne
Hearing leads men schulden here goddis comaundementis & poyntis of
them to charite & riȝtwisnesse & treuþe, þe fend stirip hem to heren
lust, slander, foul speche of lecherie, of bacbytyng of neiȝeboris &
lesyngis for to haue mynde & likyng of synne & to stire
hate men to hate & enuye & pledyng & fiȝttinge, so þat meke-
nesse & pacience & charite schullen be lost & cursednesse of
synne regneþ, þat vnneþe can ony man kepe his tonge fro
and vain swear- fals & veyn sweryng & schrewid spekyng boþe of lecherie
ing. & false spekyngis. ¶ Whanne men schullen *in* spirit smelle
Smelling þe swettenesse & þe holynesse of ihū crist & his lif, & smelle
bi bodily witt þe swettenesse & good odour of herbis & spicis
& trees, & oþere creaturis, to loue god & *serue* god & herie
hym for his goodnesse, þe fend stirip men to sette here lust
leads to luxurious *in* smellyng of lekerous metis & drynkis &³ to take ouer-
eating and drink- mochil of hem, til þei lesen here wittis & forȝeten god &
ing. his *seruyce* & fallen *in* lecherie & slepen as hooggis, & chiden
& fiȝtten as woode houndis, & sweren herte & bonys, & cursen

¹ in X.² þei X.³ omitted X.

& warien & prechen opynly cursed lesyngis, & zeuen ensaunple of synne as cruel fendis of helle. for bi þis doynge þei blasphememen god & styren men to synne more spedly þan don many þousand fendis bi hem self. whanne men schulden taste & take mete & drynk in resonable mesure to sustene Taste here lif & labore, & þer-fore þank god & serue hym mekely & wilfully & loue hym hertly, þe fend stirih men to sewe here owene lustis of flesch, to walwe in glotonye & drounke- leads to drunken- nesse as swyn in þe feen, þat þer is neiþer witt ne reson in hem, ne myzt to goo on þe erþe sumtyme; & to fulfille þis stynkyng glotonye & dronkenes þei seken many stretis & tauernes to seke lekerous morselis & swete drynkis, & Men get drunk on borrowed money. borowen oþer mennus catel & payen not aȝen many tymes; for hereby þei wasten here owene goodis & oþer mennus & comen to pouert & ben casten in prison til þei steruen. & bi þis glotonye & dronkenesse þei wasten here owen bodi & wittis & fallen in-to sikenesse¹ on many maneris & lesen worldly catel & myztis of þe soule, as vnderstondynge, mynde & reson, & geten peynes of helle in bodi & soule, but ȝif þei amende hem trewely in þis world. & þe fend techih glotonys & dronkelewe men to excuse þis wast on þis manere: "God made alle goode mete & drynke couenable for men schulden spende it & lyue þer-by;" but þei taken non hede of þe mesure ne hou falsly þei lyuen aȝenst goddis lawe, & hou crist & his seyntis tauȝten & vseden abstynence & penaunce, & hou cristene men schulden conquere heuene bi brekyng *of fleschly lustis, as crist techih in þe gospel, & * [p. 185 MS.] hou crist & poul & petir comaunden vs þat we schullen not 1 Peter ii. 11. fille þe desiris of oure flesch, but as gestis or comelyngis & pilgrimes absteynen hem² fro fleschly desires þat fȝtten aȝenst þe soule. & certis þe lesse þat a man spende boþe of mete & Thrift a good thing. drynk & cloþe & alle oþere necessities, so þat he be strong to serue god & do his labour aftir þe staat þat god settih him

¹ drynkenssis AA.

² In AA. 'hem' has been cancelled by underdotting. It should have been corrected to 'us.'

Touch leads to
lust.

Eccles. xiii. 1.

Prevalence of
uncleanness.

Jeremiah ix. 21.

inne, so moche þe betre boþe for body & soule & alle oþere men. but hou euere we excusen vs we wasten nedeles moche goode boþe in mete & drynk & cloþis, werbi pore men schulden be holpen & we betre serue god & lesse bisi aboute þe body & more bisi aboute god & helþe of oure soulis bi lesse cost & spendynge ȝif we holden goode mesure. ¶ Þe fend disceyueþ men & wymmen bi touchynge of membris ordeyned for genderure of mankynde, & bi kysying & clippyng is þe fier of lecherie kyndlid & norischid in herte til þe dede sue, & many tymes long custome in¹ þis cursed synne. þerfore seiþ þe wise man, he þat handliþ pich schal be foulid þer-of : þat is men handlynge wymmen & kyssynge hem schullen be blickid wiþ lust of lecherie, oþer in herte oþer in body or ellis in boþe. þerfore ierom & seyntis seyn þat fleyng fro suche companye & abstynence & saad traueile is best medecyne aȝenst lecherie ; but þis weiward dalliaunce wiþ wymmen is so comyn þat vnneþe can ony man kepe hym clene, or sengle or weddid or men of ordre of² religion. And þus it is verrified þat god seiþ by Jeromye ; deþ haþ entrid by ȝoure wyndowis, þat ben fyue wittes. bi þes queyntises & many moo þe fend disceyueþ men & of instrumentis or³ menys & armu[r]e of vertue he makiþ instrumentis or menys & armour of synne. God graunte vs grace to haue mynde on þe peynes þat crist suffrede in his⁴ herte, in his hondis & feet, in his heed, in his siȝtte, & herynge, spekyng, smellynge, & tastynge, & in eche place of his bodi fro þe heued to þe sole of þe foot, & to spende alle þe myȝttis of soule & bodi & oure fyue wittis trewely in his seruyce, to seke his worschipe in⁵ alle þingis & distroie synne & falsnesse boþe in oure self & oþere men, & to holde & meyntene vertuous lif & riȝtwisnesse & pees & charite. Amen.

¹ & X.

² and AA.

³ of X.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵ & X.

XIV.

HOW RELIGIOUS MEN SHOULD KEEP CERTAIN
ARTICLES.

I SEE nothing in this tract to give us any certainty as to its authorship. It is simply an enumeration of the faults charged against the religious orders, thrown into the form of a wish that they may be avoided.

The special points for notice are the mention of astronomy among the subjects taught in the religious schools (No. 39), and the complaint that the friars were "too homely with gentlewomen by colour of physic" (No. 38), (cf. Prof. Brewer's preface to *Monumenta Franciscana*, pp. xliii-xlvi). The same charge is made in the tract *Of the Leaven of Pharisees*. The abuse of bishoprics *in partibus infidelium* conferred on men who only desire episcopal orders for the profit to be made of them at home (No. 40) is, I think, mentioned nowhere else in this volume. It is attacked in the *Great Sentence of Curse* (S.E.W. III. 300).

We may see from No. 42 the kind of retort made by the friars on the poor preachers.

The only indication of date is in No. 26, where we learn that one of the points of the poor preachers was the application of the prophecies of Antichrist to the Pope. The preachers are not likely to have begun with arguments of this kind. Still we cannot lay much stress on this argument; such use of prophecy had long been familiar to the Fraticelli.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.
I have omitted the usual summary as useless with a mere list like this.

How religious men shoulde kepe certayne Articles.¹

- Cristene men preien mekely & deuoutly to almyȝtty god þat he graunte his grace for his hendeles mercy to oure religious, boþe possessioneris & mendynauntis, þat þei assenten to þis fewe treuþis. ¶ First, þat þei louen more heuenly þingis þan worldly þat soone schullen passe. þe secunde, þat þei setten more pris & deynte bi goddis comaundementis þan bi tradicions maad *of here owene synful hedis.³
- I.² ¶ þe þridde, þat þei holden in herte, in word, & dede þat þe noble religion maad of ihu⁴ crist for prestis in here clenness & fredom is more perfit þan ony newe⁵ religion maad of synful men þat ofte erreden in þouȝt, word & dede. ¶ þe firþe, þat þei chargen more sixtene condicions of charite þan here bodely abite. ¶ þe fifte, þat þei loue more pouert of þe gospel, to whiche þei ben bounden bi here owene reule & profession, þan richesse of þe world, þat ben clepid drit bi seynt þoul in holy writt, for which richessis þei make ofte sacrifice to fendis & honouren false goddis as seynt poul seiþ. ¶ þe sixte, þat þei loue more resonable abstynence þan glotonye, wombe ioie & ydelnesse. ¶ þe seuenþe, þat þei loue more þe treuþe of holy writt þan ypocrisie & lesyngis of þe fend. ¶ þe eȝte, þat þei loue more þe honour of god & saluacion of mennus soulis þan here owen worldly pride & veyn glorie & singuler profit.
- II.
* [p. 186 MS.]
III.
IV.
1 Cor. xiii. 4.
V.
Religious men should love poverty.
Phil. iii. 8.
VI.
Col. iii. 5.
Temperance.
VII.
VIII.
IX.
Keeping God's laws more than man's.
X.
- ¶ þe neyenþe, þat þei setten more prise bi þe most riȝtful & most profitable ordynaunce⁶ of god,⁶ boþe for clerkis, lordis & comunys, þan bi þe wrongful & vnwitty ordynaunce of synful men þat harmen alle þes þre. ¶ þe tenþe, þat þei louen more & kepen betre þe most witti reulis of ihū crist þan þe

¹ The title in AA. is "Hou men of priuat religioun schulden loue more þe gospel, goddis heste and his ordynaunce þan ony newe lawis, newe reulis and custumes and ordynauncis of synful men." The title given above is inserted in X by a later hand; having been omitted by the scribe. I have left the shorter title for its greater convenience.

² The numbers at the side are only in AA.

³ dedis X.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵ rewe X.

⁶⁻⁶ omitted X.

vnwitti constitucions of synful & worldly men. ¶ þe elleuenþe, XI.
 þat þei magnyfien more obedience maad to god in cristendom
 takynge biforme of þe gospel þan newe obedience maad
 singulerly to a synful man, þat is not comaundid of god
 neiþer ensaumplid of ihū crist & his apostlis but don of here
 owene synguler ordynaunce. ¶ þe twelþe, þat noman be XII.
 dispised ne ponyschid for good lyuynge in suynge ihū cristis
 steppis bi forme of þe gospel. ¶ þe þrittenþe, þat þei studie XIII.
 & kepe more þe fredom & priuylegies grauntid of ihū crist
 in þe gospel þan wrongful priuelegies grauntid of synful
 men, bi whiche boþe pride & coueitise & þefte & wrongis
 ben meyntened many tymes. ¶ þe fourtenþe, þat þei ben XIV.
 verreyly dede to pompe & pride & coueitise of þe world & to Deadness to the
world.
 glotonye & to fleschly synnes, & not ded fro nedful traueile
 & profitenge to opere men vp þe ȝiftis þat god¹ haþ ȝouen
 hym. ¶ þe fiftenþe, þat þei ben not goddis maistris, to dwelle XV.
 euermore in o place & o manere of lif at here owene lust,
 but frely & wilfully aftir goddis ȝiftis traueilen & dwelle þer
 þat it² is most worschipful to god & most nedful & profitable
 to cristene soulis. ¶ þe sextenþe, þat þei ben verrey bokis & XVI.
 myrroures of mekenesse, wilful pouert & of besi traueile in
 goddis cause & holynesse to alle men in þe world, & not bok
 or myrroure of *pride, of coueitise, of ydelnesse & worldly lif *[p. 187 MS.]
 to drawe worldly men³ in-to coueitise & opere synnys & at
 here laste to helle. þe seuentenþe, þat þei drawen not noble XVII.
 bokis of holy writt & holy doctouris & opere nedeful sciencis
 fro curatis & clerkis in-to here owene cloistris, þat ben as
 castellis or paleicis of kyngis & emperouris, & suffre hem be Not to monopo-
lise books that
they do not use.
 closed þere & waxe rotyn, & neiþer ȝeue hem ne lene hem
 ne selle hem to curatis & clerkis, þat myȝtten, couden &
 wolden lerne holy writt & teche it frely for loue of mennus
 soulis. þe eiȝtenþe, þat þei louen more comyn profit of cristene XVIII.
 men, boþe gostly & bodily, þan here synguler worldly profit
 & here owene bodily ayse & welfare. þe neyntenþe, þat þei XIX.

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ omitted X.

- Not to promote
dissension by
multiplying
sects. make not discencion ne gendre strif ne enuye among *cristene*
men bi multipliynge of newe sectis, newe abitis & newe bi-
lawis, But drawe to vnyte & charite, as þer is o god, o
XX. bileue, & o *cristendom*. þe twentiþe, þat þei suffre not pore
men to be oppressid bi taxis & oþere chargis more þan þei
may wel bere, þe while þat þei han plente of riches &
Not to waste the
money of the poor
on building great
houses. wast iuelis to purchase londis & lordischipis & bilde grete
waste houses, siþ alle here goodis ben pore mennus goodis,
& þei ben but spenderis or keperis of þe goodis & *procura-*
Jerome. *touris* of pore men, as seynt ierom & þe lawe of þe chirche
XXI. witnessen. þe on and twentiþe, þat þei conforten not riche
men in here false lif, & stoppe not restitucion to be maad to
Not to stop resti-
tution by leading
men to rely on
prayers which
may be worth not
a farthing. pore men bi sikyrnesse of here *perpetual* preiere, whanne þei
XXII. witten not where here preiere be worþ o ferþing. þe two
& twentiþe, þat þei make not comyns so pore bi sotil
ypocrisie of gredy beggyng & trentalis, to make grete festis
Not to be greedy
in begging. & waste housynge, þat þe comyns may not forþe to paie here
tribut to þe kyng & rentis to lordis & dymes & offrynges to
XXIII. curatis. þe þre & twenþe, þat in alle þingis þei ben bisi to
seke goddis worschipe & loue hym & his lawe & holde no
custome ne tradicion þat hyndriþ hem¹ to *serue* god, but take
goode customes in as moche as þei helpen hem to kepe goddis
hestis & no more, for lif ne for deþ. god brynge hem to þis
XXIV. charite. þe foure & twentiþe, þat þei hiren not grete men
bi gold fees & robees & false gostly helpe to be goddis
Not to bribe
great men to
uphold them in
wrong. *traitouris*, holdynge aʒenst his lawe & his ordynaunce to
magnifye *anticristis* clerkis & synful mennus ordynaunce.
XXV. þe fyue & twentiþe, þat þei quenche not þe ʒiftis of god &
so þe holy gost as moche as is in hem, lettyng trewe
prechyng of þe gospel, laste here pride, coueitise & ypocrisie
be knowen. þe sixe² & twentiþe, *þat þei pursuen not *crist*
XXVI. in his membris for trewe prechyng of holy writt & trewe
Not to persecute
true preachers. schewynge of synne to þe peple, & of *anticrist* & his clerkis,
bi *prophecie* of ihū *crist* & his apostlis, pleynly tauʒt &

¹ hym X.² siþe X.

comaundid of god to be tauȝt trewely & opynly to his peple.

þe seuene & twentiþe, þat þei blyndyn not þe kyng & lordis **XXVII.**

bi ypocrisie & false lesyngis to meyntene wrong ordynaunce
of synful men for pride & coueitise, aȝenst goddis lawe & here

owene profit & helpe of þe comyns. þe eiȝte & twentiþe, **XXVIII.**

þat þei approprien not parische chirchis to ouer riche houses Not to appropriate
parish churches
and put in incom-
petent curates.

bi false sugestions & symonye, & putten þere an ydiot, &
ȝeuen hym to litel liflode & taken alle þe profite to hem self,

& letten goode curatis of here liflode & trewe techynge of
cristene peple & helpe of pore men in¹ parischis & goddis

seruyce & holdynge vp of þe chirchis in hilynge & bokis &
opere ornamentis. þe nyne and twentiþe, þat þei procuren not **XXIX.**

children to here religion bi sikyrnesse of worldly lordschipe Not to seduce
children into
their order by
ill means.

& wombe ioie & ydelnesse, & þanne make hem bi profession
bynde hem to grett pouert & to be dede to worldly myrþe &

likynge; siþ þo þat comen more to þes religious for pride,
coueitise, sikyrnesse of bodily welfare þan for loue of meke-

nesse to lyue in pouert & discret abstynence & penaunce, ben
cursed & symonyentis in þe entre. þe þrittiþe, þat þes **XXX.**

mendynauntis disceyuen not children bi lesyngis & ypocrisie
& biheste of worldly honour & welfare as wel as gret prelatiſ

& bischopis to come & lyue herby in here priuat secte,
preisynge it more þan þe noble & free religion maad & kept

of ihū crist & his apostlis. þe on & þrittiþe, þat þei stelen **XXXI.**
not riche mennus children & pore, & leden hem to ferre Not to kidnap
children.

contres fro here frendis & holde hem cloos til þei ben professid
aȝenst here wille, & þan suffre hem not to goo out þouȝ þei

ben vnable to kepe þis religion; siþ þei sillen in a manere
þes children to þis priuat ordre for worschipe & worldly

wynnyng & constreyne hem to here dampnacion. þe two **XXXII.**

& þrittiþe, þat þei sende not gold out of þe rewme in-to Not to send money
out of the king-
dom to buy dis-
pensations from
their rule.

aliens hondis for to gete priuylegies & dispensacions aȝenst
þe² poyntis of here reule ȝif it be resonable & profitable, &

ȝif it be vnresonable & vnprofitable late no man bynde hym

¹ & X.

² omitted AA.

- per-to; But lyue frely vnder clene religion þat crist maade
 XXXIII. in whiche may noon *errour* be. þe þre & þrittiþe, þat, siþ
 That they should be subject to the bishops and the law. þei preisen so mochil obedience maad to man, þat þei ben
 not exempt fro obedience to bischopis & to þe comyn lawe
 XXXIV. boþe of þe chirche & of þe lond. þe foure & þrittiþe, þat
 Nor buy exemp- tions from the pope. þei ȝeuen not a pencion of moche gold to þe pope for to be
 exempt fro visitacions of bischopis & iust correccion, siþ þei
 * [p. 189 MS.] holden *mannus obedience so medful, last herby þei waxen
 rotyn in synne & þe ordynaries doren not amende hem bi
 forme of þe gospel for þes weiward exempcions, siþ robert
 grosted clepiþ sicke exempcion þe deuelis nettis. ¶ þe fyue
 XXXV. & þrittiþe, siþ it is a grete sentence of þe chirche þat who
 euere doþ aȝenst þe riȝtful wille of a dede man is cursed,
 late it be enquired where þes religious, myspendynge here
 goodis in pompe & worldly plees & newe purchasynges, &
 That they should be made to keep their founder's will. leuynges þe noumbre of prestis & helpynge of pore men, aȝenst
 here foundouris wille, & getynge priuylegies & dispensynge
 aȝenst here reulis maad of holy men as þei seyn, where þei
 ben cursed or not; & ȝif þei ben late alle men helpe & make
 hem kepe þe friste riȝtful wille of here¹ foundour & patron.
 XXXVI. þe sixe & þrittiþe, þat þei make not enuye, strif & plee
 Not to make quarrels between curates and their parishioners. bitwixe curatis & hem and² bitwixe curatis & here sugetis
 for here priueleygies of confession & sepulture & mortuaries
 XXXVII. & false lesyngis makynge. þe seuene & þrittiþe, þat þei
 norischen not men & wommen in lecherie, in wrong disceit of
 fals chaffarynges & extorcion doynges, lettynges verrey resti-
 tucion of euyl gotten goodis & þe schame of grete synneris ȝif
 þei were schryue at here owene curatis, for to haue þart of
 þis³ robberie, & make worldly festis & wast houses aȝenst
 here pouert & profession, bi colour of trentalis & longe
 XXXVIII. preieris in siȝtte of men. þe eiȝte & þrittiþe, þat þei ben
 Not to get into ladies' company under pretence of doctoring. not in lordis courtis reuleris of here householdis & worldly
 officis, & to homly wiþ gentil wymmen bi colour of fisik, for
 drede of sclaundrynge & mysdoynges, siþ þei lyuen in reste &

¹ omitted X.² omitted X.³ his X.

welfare of body & ben ȝonge & stronge of complexion, & sathanas is redi to tempte hem. ¶ þe nyne & þrittiþe, þat XXXIX.

þei studien bisily holy writt & techen it more þan veyn To study holy writ rather than sophistrie & astronomye & more þan þe popis decretalis & astronomy.

fablis & cronyclis; siþ þat it¹ is best & most nedeful & þei han grete wittes of kynde & grete leiser to studien þus. þe fortipþe, þat þei ben not maad bischopis of heþene men & XL.

sweren to goo þider & conuerte hem, & þanne meyntened Bishops in partibus. to be suffragans & sellen sacramentis & robben þe peple & maken hem haue goddis curs for here money. þe on & XLI.

fourtiþe, þat þes newe religious blasphememen not god in holdynge a prest of here ordre apostata & cursed ȝif he lyue Not to excommunicate those who withdraw from their order.

Among cristene peple where he haþ resonable euydence to profit most þi good ensauple of holy lif & trewe & free prechyng wip-oute flaterynge & beggyng & lesyngis sewyng. ¶ þe two & fourtiþe, þat þei blasphememen not god, XLII.

takyng vp-on hem self knowynge approprid to god, þat þis prest coueitþ fredom of þe *gospel for his eise & lustis in Not to pretend to knowledge which God has kept to himself. *[p. 190 MS.] synne of boði; þat þis child schal betre serue god in þis

newe ordre than in clene ordre þat crist maade; þat it is betre to begge of pore men & do aftir o foolis styryng þan do mercy to cristene soulis aftir styryng of god. þe þre & XLIII.

fourtiþe, þat þei preise not more obedience to synful men bi Not to set the rules of their order above family ties. synguler profession, not ensaumplid² of crist & his apostlis, þan medful obedience of children to fadir & modir & of

seruauntis to here lordis & maistris; siþ god techiþ & comaunde þis obedience & þe merit þer-of, last mannus folie be heized more þan goddis ordynaunce. þe laste, þat alle clerkis XLIV.

of religion & oþere examynen wel whiche is þe beste ordre for prestis, where it be possessioneris ordre or mendynauntis or ellis þe mene þat crist made & kepte & his apostlis alle; þat is presthod bi fredom & clenness of cristis reule in þe gospel. ¶ late alle prestis kepe þe beste & leue þe lesse profit.

god for þis³ endeles mercy bryng alle prestis her-to & make lordis & comyns to constreyne hem to þis. Amen.

¹ omitted AA.

² ensaumplis in both MSS.

³ omitted X.

XV.

OF SERVANTS AND LORDS.

I HAVE little doubt of the authenticity of this tract, or of the date to which we ought to assign it. It was written soon after the Wat Tyler riots, when Wyclif and his followers were discredited by a supposed complicity with John Ball (cf. Wals. II. 33). The indignant disclaiming of Socialist doctrine is fearlessly combined with denunciation of the oppressions committed by the rich. The complaint that "lords strive with their tenants to bring them into thralldom more than they should by reason and charity" (p. 234), is a proof, if one were needed, of the kind of injustice which led to the revolt. The author had lived among the poor and been an eye-witness of oppression, or he would not have insisted with such force on the need of the lord's presence to control the extortions of his steward (p. 240), nor should we have had the touch of the white (tally) sticks, which the poor were made to accept for their goods (p. 233).

The distinction between refusing tithes to wicked priests and withholding dues from wicked lords or creditors, is clearly stated on pp. 229-230.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

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Of *seruauntis* & lordis hou eche schal kepe his degree.

First, *seruauntis* schullen trewely & gladly *serue* to here Duty of servants.
 lordis or maistris & not be fals ne idel ne grucchyng ne
 heuey in here *seruyce* doynge, but holde hem paied of þe
 staat of *seruauntis*, in whiche god haþ ordeyned hem for here
 beste to holde hem in mekenesse aȝenst pride, & besi traueile
 aȝenst ydelnesse & slouþe. for seynt poul biddiþ þat ȝif þou 1 Cor. vii. [21.]
 be clepid a *seruaunt*, recke þou not þer-of; þat is to seiþe be
 not grucchyng ne heuy þerfore. ¶ Also poul techiþ þus: “ȝe Ephes. vi. [5.]
seruauntis obeische to fleschly lordis wiþ drede & ~~grucchyng~~ kyng
 or tremelyng, in sympilnesse of ȝoure herte, as to crist; not
seruyng at þe eiȝe, as plesyng to men, but as *seruauntis* of
 crist, doynge þe wille of god of herte, wiþ goode wille
seruyng as to þe lord of alle lordis & not to men; wityng
 þat eche man what euere good þing he do schal resceyue þat
 of þe lord, be he *seruaunt* or bonde or free man;” þat is to
 seiþe reward of god for þat good doynge. ¶ Also poul techiþ Col. iii. [22.]
 þus *seruauntis*; “obeche, ȝe *seruauntis*, bi alle þingis to fleschly
 lordis. what þing euere ȝe don worche ȝe of herte, þat is
 wisdom & wille, as to þe lord & not to men, wityng þat of
 þe lord ȝe¹ schulle take² retribucion, þat is mede or reward,
 of heritage in heuene. *serue* ȝe to þe lord crist; for who þat
 doþ wrong or iniurye schal resceyue þat þing þat he haþ
 wickydly don, & anemptis god is not accepcion or takyng
 of personys.” þat is o man schal not be sparid in goddis dom
 for his richessis or lordschipis or heiȝ blood, & a pore man
 be ponyschid for a litel trespas, as men don in þis wickid
 world, but eche man schal be ponyschid after his owene gilte,
 & *eche man rewardid after his owene goode lif. but here þe *[p. 191 MS.]
 fend moueþ summe men to seiþe þat cristene men schullen not False Socialist
 be *seruauntis* or þrallis to heþene lordis, siþ þei ben false to teachers.
 god & lasse worþy þan cristene men; neiþer to cristene lordis,
 for þei ben breþeren in kynde, & ihū crist bouȝte cristene

¹ he X.

² omitted X.

- men on þe crois & made hem fre; but aʒenst þis heresie poul writiþ þus in¹ goddis lawe: “what kynne *seruauntis* ben vnder ʒook of *seruage* deme þei here lordis worþi alle manere honour or worschipe, þat þe name & techynge of þe lord be not blasphemyd,” þat is, holden wrongful & dispised; & þis word is vndirstonden of heþene lordis. “but þo *seruauntis* þat han trewe or cristene lordis, dispise þei not to *serue* hem for þat þei ben breþeren boþe in kynde & in feiþ, but more *serue* þei for þe lordis ben cristene & louyd, þe whiche ben *partyners* of good dede. teche þou þes þingis,” seiþ poul to bischop thymothe, “boþe to men þat ben vnlearned, And stire men þat ben lerned & necligent in doynge. ʒif ony man techiþ oþer wise, & accordiþ not to þe hoole wordis of oure lord ihū crist & to þat lore þat is after pitee, he is proude, no þing kunnyng, but weilyng or languyschyng aboute questiouns & fiʒttinge of wordis, of whiche ben gendred enuyes² st[r]yues & blasphemes, þat ben dispisyngis of god, euyl suspescions & fiʒttingis to-gedre of men þat ben corrupt in herte or soule, þat ben priued fro treuþe.” ¶ Also poul techiþ þat generaly cristene men & wymmen schullen be so holy of lif, þat men out of bileue be aschamed & haue noon euyl to seie of cristene men, & chargiþ *seruauntis* to be suget, or vnderlout,³ to here lordis, & plesynge in alle þingis, & not aʒen seiynge, not doynge fraude, but in alle þingis schewynge good feiþ or fidelite or treuþe, to worschipe, or to make fair in alle þingis þe techynge of god oure saueour.
- 1 Peter iii. [16.] And þerfore techiþ petir þat cristene men schullen haue so good conscience & so good lif þat enemys of oure feiþ þat bakbiten or myspeken of vs ben confounded, & also þei þat falsly chalengen oure goode lif in crist be stoppid; & petir spekiþ more pleynly of þis matir, & comaundiþ cristene men to haue goode lyuyng amonge heþene men, þat in þat þing þat þei myspeken of vs, as of mysdoeris, þat þei beholden & see vs of oure goode werkis, & glorifie god in þe tyme of

¹ & X.² enemyes X.³ under lout X.

visitacion. ¶ But ȝit summe men þat ben out of charite Somemen impute these Socialist teachings to poor priests. sclaunderen pore prestis wiþ þis errour, þat seruauntis or tenauntis may lawefully wiþholde rentis & seruyce¹ fro here lordis whanne lordis ben opynly wickid in here lyuynges. & þei maken þis false *lesyngis vpon pore prestis to make lordis *[p. 192 MS.] to hate hem, & not to meyntene treuþe of goddis lawe þat þei techen opynly for worschipe of god & profit of² þe reume and stablynges of þe kyngis pouer &³ distroynges of synne. for þes pore prestis distroien most bi goddis lawe rebelte of seruauntis aȝwiþ lordis, & charge seruauntis to be suget þouȝ lordis bi tirauntis, for seynt petir techiþ þus: “Be ye ser- 1 Peter ii. [18.] uauntis suget to lordis in alle manere of⁴ drede, not only to goode lordis & bonere,⁵ but also to tirauntis, or sicke þat drawen fro goddis scole.” for, as seynt poul seiþ, eche Romans xiii. [1.] man owiþ to be suget to heiȝere potestatis, þat is to men of heiȝe power, for þer is no power but of god; & so he þat aȝenstondiþ power, stondiþ aȝenst þe ordynaunce of god; but þei þat aȝenstonden geten to hem self dampnacion. & þerfore poul biddiþ þat we be suget to princes bi nede, & not only for wraþþe but also for conscience; & þerfore we paien tributis to princis, for þei ben mynystris of god; & poul biddiþ vs paie cettis to alle men, tribut to hym þat we owen tribut, & so of taliage for þingis boren aboute in lond, & so drede & also worschipe or honour. & þus seruauntis schulden trewely & wilfully seruen lordis & here maistris, & lyue in reste, pees & charite, & stire lordis, þouȝ þei weren heȝene lordis, to good cristene feiþ & holy lif bi here pacience & opyn trewe lif & meke. & þis is a feyned word of anticristis clerkis þat, ȝif sugetis may lefffully wiþdrawe tiþes & offryngis To withdraw rents is not the same as to withdraw tithes. fro curatis þat openly lyuen in lecherie or grete opere synnes & don not here office, þan seruauntis & tenauntis may wiþdrawe here seruyce & rentis fro here lordis þat lyuen opynly a cursed lif. for to þe first sugetis han þe auctorite of goddis lawe & mannis lawe also, but not to wiþdrawe

¹ seruyces AA. ² on X. ³ in X. ⁴ omitted AA. ⁵ honoure X.

seruyce & rentis fro wickid lordis; but ben chargid of god bi petir & poul to be þus suget to wickid lordis; & þerfore crist paiede for hym & his apostlis tribut to þe heþene emperour. & we reden not þat he or ony apostle paide tipes to þe wickid heiþe prestis after tyme þat he began to preche.

¶ Also lordis han power of mennus bodies & catel in resonable maner, & temperale swerd & worldly power bi goddis lawe to compelle men to do here seruyce & paie rentis. But bi þe gospel & cristis lif & his apostlis, prestis han n^o sicke power to constreyne men to paie hem dymes, & p^{re}^{is}, "paly whanne þei don not here gostly office, but harmen he^{ll}er sugetis in fals techynge & euyll ensauple of lif. but þot^e þei deden wele here office & men wolden not paie dymes, þei schulden suffren mekely & not curse, as ihū crist dide.

The duty of lords. See we now hou lordis schulden lyue in here astaat. first, þei schulden knowe goddis lawe & studie it & meyntene it, & distroie wrong & meyntene pore men in here riȝt to lyue in reste, pees & charite, & suffre no¹ men vn^{der} colour of hem to do extorcions, bete men, & holde pore men out of riȝt bi strengþe of lordischipis. ¶ For þus spekiþ holy writt in þe fift^e bok of goddis lawe; "whanne þe kyni is ordeyned bi þe chesyng of god & of his peple, he schal not multiplie to hym self many hors, he schal not haue many wyues to drawe his herte to lustis, & he schal not haue oute of mesure grete weiȝttis of siluer & gold, but after þat he schal sitte in sege of his regne, he schal writte to him þe bok of goddis lawe in a volym, takynge ensaumplierie of prestis o þe kynrede of leuy, & haue it wiþ him, & he schal rede it alle þe daies of his lif, þat he kunne drede þe lord his od & kepe his wordis, þe whiche ben comaundid in þe lawe, & his herte schal not be lift vp in-to pride vpon his breþerⁿ, & he schal not croke in-to þe riȝtte side ne in-to þe left ide, þat he & his children regne long tyme vpon Israel." ¶ Also kyngis & lordis schulde axe of god, bi gret desir & holy lif, wisdom of

¹ not X.² first AA.

heuenely þingis & kunnyng of erþely þingis to reule goddis
 peple bi, & not richessis, ne worldly substaunces,¹ ne worldly
 glorie, ne vnresonable vengauces of here enemys, ne long
 lif in þis world, as kyng samon² dede, & þerfore god ȝaf him
 wisdom of heuenely þingis & of erþely þingis & richessis &
 substaunce & glorie, þat neuere kyng bi-fore hadde so moche
 ne aftir. ¶ Also so³ kyngis & lordis schulden be cloþid wiþ Job xxix. [14,
etc.] riȝtwisnesse & riȝtful dom as wiþ a diademe, & be eiȝe to a
 blynd man & foot to þe crokid or haltyng, & be fadir of
 pore men, & wiþ most diligence sike þe cause þat þei knowe
 not, & defoule & distroie þe power of a wickid man, & take
 a-wey þe prey out of his teeþ; & whanne þei sitten as kyngis⁴
 & compaynes stonden aboute þei schulden [be] confortours
 of mornynge men & men ful of myscheyf, & delyuere pore
 men cryng, & fadirles children & moderles þat han noon
 helpe, & so haue blyssynge of him þat was in poynt to
 perische, & conforte þe widwis herte. þes goodnessis & many
 moo vsed þe holy kyng iob, & ben in holy writt for ensaumpel
 of kyngis & lordis. Also god him self seiþ bi ieromye þat Jerem. xxii. 3. 5.
 he schal take vengauce on hem þat demeden not riȝthfully
 þe cause⁵ of widwe, þe cause of fadirles & modirles, & þe cause
 of pore men. Also god hym self seiþ⁶ by ysaie, þat princes Isaiah i. [16.]
 schullen cesse to don euele & lerne to do wel, & seke dom,
 & helpe men oppressid wrongly, & ȝeue dom to fadirles &
 modirles, & meyntene þe widwe, & come & reproue him; þat
 is to seiȝe, but ȝif he þan helpe hem. & þerfore seiþ holy writt Prov. xx. [28.]
 þat mercy & trewþe kept of kyngis, & his trone is maade
 strong bi mekenesse * & mercy, & þe kyng þat sittip in sete of *[p. 194 MS.]
Prov. xx. 8.
 dom distroieþ alle euyl in his lokynge, & so it plesip more to
 god to do mercy & dom þan to do sacrifices; & þus salamon Prov. xxv. 5.
 seiþ, þat þei þat don wickedly ben abhominable to þe kyng,
 for his sete is maade stable bi riȝtwisnesse; & þus seiþ dauid, Psalms xcix. 4.
 þat þe honour of þe kyng loueþ dom; & for þe riȝtful & witti
 dom þat salamon dide bitwixen tweie comyn wymmen, alle

¹ sustenaunces X.² salamon AA.³ omitted X.⁴ lyngis X.⁵ omitted X.⁶ omitted X.

Rom. xiii. [3.] þe lond of israel drede hym. & þerfore techiþ poul þat princes ben not to drede of good werk but of euyl, & a man sette in grete power beriþ not wiþ-oute grete cause þe swerd, þat is worldly power, for he is a mynystre of god to do vengauunce to him þat doþ euyle. & seynt petir techiþ generally cristene men to be suget to eche man for god, & to þe kyng as to souereyn bifore oþere, & to dukis as seynt of þe kyng¹ to vengauunce of mysdedis or mysdoeris & to preisyng² of goode dedis or goode doeris. ¶ Also poul techiþ lordis þus: “þe lordis, ȝeue to *seruauntis* þat þing þat is riȝtful & equite & euene, witynge þat ȝe also han a lord in heuene.”

Col. iv. [1.] also poul seiþ in a-pistel of ephesyns: “& ȝe lordis, do to *seruauntis* þe same þingis, þat is goode riȝtwisnesse & equitye of herte, & wiþ goode wille, forȝeuyng manasse; witynge þat boþe ȝoure lord & hern is in heuenes, &³ accepcioun⁴ of persones is not anemptis god;” þat is, god sparet not for richesse ne lordischepe ne worldly frendischepe to ponysche synnes, & sparet not for pouerte to rewarde good lyuyng of pore *seruauntis*.

¶ Siþ þis is þe office of kyngis & lordis, to venge þus synnys & to preise & rewarde goode dedis, ȝif lordis leuen þis office, & meyn-tenen synful men & wrong doeris, & helpen not pore men in here riȝt, þei may drede þat here kyngdom & lordischipis schullen be translated in-to anoþer folk, as þe wyse man seiþ: “a kyngdom is⁵ translated from o peple in-to anoþer for vnriȝtwisnesse, & iniuries or wrongis, & contekis or debatis, & for dyuerse giles or disceitis.” for men dreden⁶ þat vnriȝtwisnesse aȝenst god regneþ in oure lond; for men dreden more to displese an erþely dedly wrecche for lesyng of worldly frendischepe þan to displese god almyȝtty & to lese his moste blissed frendischepe; & loue more to performe a wrong comaundement of proude luciferis children þan to performe þe moste riȝtful comaundement of god, þat is esy & sikirere; & louen more a litel stynkyng drit of worldly goodis þan þei louen þe blisse of

¹ lyng X.² preiyng X.³ in X.⁴ excepcion X.⁵ omitted AA.⁶ dredem X.

heuene; for many men maken hem more bisy to geten worldly muk þan to geten vertues & holy lif, & maken more sorowe whanne þei fallen fro worldly catel in-to pouerte þan whanne þei fallyn fro grace & charite & opere vertues in-to many orble¹ synnys. Also men *louen more to venge wrongis & dispites don to here owene personys or lordischipis þan to venge wronggis or dispitis don aʒenst þe mageste of god almyʒtty; as ʒif a man speke a word of litel reprof or vilonye of a lord or a grete man of þis world he schal be pursued & peyned þer-fore þat alle þe world or many men schullen wondere vpon hym, but ʒif men speken falsnesse bi oure god, seiynge þat crist beggede² as men don now nedles, or dispisen his name bi cursid swerynge, or speken vilonye of lecherie or of opere foule synnys to foule cristene soulis þerbi, þei ben not pursued ne hurlid out, but chirischid & holde goode felawis, & summe ʒit ben holden holy men, for goddis lawe is not knowen & here ypocrisie is ʒit hid, & þus vnriʒtwisnesse regneþ vpon many sidis.

iniuries or wrongis ben don to pore men many weies; for prelatis techen hem not treuely goddis lawe, neiþer in word ne ensauple of holy lif, & ʒit þei cursen faste for here dymes & offryngis of pore men, whanne þei schulden raþere ʒeue hem worldly goodis þan take of hem; for prelatis wasten in pride, glotonye,³ worldly plees & grete festis of lordis and riche men þe tresor of pore men, þe while þei ben in moche peyne & wrecchidnesse in bodi & soule; & ʒit prelatis wolen not do sacramentis & here gostly office to here sugetis, as halwyng of chirchis and auteris & chircheʒerdis & opere ornamentis, but⁴ ʒif men bien hem for moche money; & þanne comynly þe biere & þe sellere ben cursed of god. also lordis many tymes don wrongis to pore men bi extorscions & vnresonable mercymentis & vnresonable taxis, & taken pore mennus goodis & paien not þerfore but white stickis, & dispisen hem

*[p. 195 MS.]
Men are apt to
revenge.

Friars.

Swearing.

Wrongs of poor
men.

Wickedness of
prelates.

Lords do wrong
to the poor.

Take their goods
and pay them
with tally-sticks.

¹ horrible AA.

² begge X.

³ gloterie AA. and so generally through the tract.

⁴ omitted X.

manassen hem & sumtyme beten hem whanne þei axen here peye. & þus lordis deuouren pore mennus goodis in glotonye & wast & pride, & þei perischen for myschief, &¹ hungur & þrist & colde, & þere children also; & ȝif here rente be not redily paied here bestis ben stressid & þei þursued wiþouten mercy, þouȝ þei be neuere so pore & nedi & ouerchargid wiþ age, febilnesse & loos of catel & wiþ many children. & ȝit lordis wolen not mekely here a pore mannus cause & helpe hym in his riȝte, but suffre sisouris of contre to distroie hem, but rapere wyþholden pore men here hire, for whiche þei han spendid here fleisch & here blood. & so in a manere þei eten & drynken pore mennus fleisch & blood & ben manquelleris, as god pleyneþ bi his prophetis. wherefore

Isaiah i. [15. 23.]

god seiþ bi þe prophete ysaie, þat sicke lordis ben felawis of þeuys & here hondis ben ful of blood, & þerfore whanne þei preien many preieris bi mouþ & holden vp *here hondis, god wole not here hem ne resceyue here offryngis þat ben wrongfully geten of pore mennus goodis bi extorcions & raueyne & robberie. & ȝit men of lawe, þat schulden distroie sicke falsnesse bi here offices & don eche man riȝt & reson,² meyn-
 tenen wrong for money & fees & robis, & forbaren pore men fro³ here riȝt, þat it is betre to hem to pursue not for here riȝt, be it neuere so opyn, þan to pursue & lese more catel for disceitis of delaies and cauellacions & euele wilis⁴ þat þei vsen; & þus wrong is meyntened & trewþe & riȝt outlawid in many statis.

*[p. 196 MS.]

Wrongs done by lawyers.

¶ Also stryues, contekis & debatis ben vsed in oure lond, for lordis stryuen wiþ here tenauntis to brynge⁵ hem in þraldom more þan þei schulden bi reson & charite; & þei grucchen aȝen, & cursen & warien nyȝt & day, & grete men of þis world⁶ debaten, & meynntenen debatis at louedaies; & who so may be strengere wil haue his wille don, be it wrong be it riȝt, & ellis make debate among many hundrid & þousand men & sumtyme many countres, & by⁷ sich debatynges many men holden grete houses & grete araies &

Serfdom.

Wrongs done at love-days.

¹ as X.

² X inserts &.

³ for X.

⁴ willes X.

⁵ brynke X.

⁶ worldly AA.

⁷ omitted X.

grete costis. & summe lordis, seme þei neuere so holy & deuout in here preieres, wolen to meyntene name of here lordischiþe beten men of contre, & meyntenen oþere mysdoeris þer-to, þouȝ men pursuen riȝt & reson in good manere, & þis is for falsnesse of a liere & coueitise & worldly pride. & clerkis striuen for holy writt & seyn þat it is most trewe & best to reule cristene mennus soulis bi, but ypocritis seyn þat holy writt is fals, & newe lawis maad of worldly clerkis ben betre for cristene men þan holy writt, & þerfore þei studien mannus lawis & techen hem to coloure bi here pride & coueitise; & leuen þe gospel & goddis lawe, for it dampneþ pride & coueitise of clerkis, & techiþ mekenesse & wiiful pouerte & bisynesse in preiere & gostly occupacion. trewe clerkis seyn þat þat religion & ordre þat crist, god & man, maade is most perfit, most liȝt & most siker for myȝt, wisdom & charite of þe lord; but ypocritis seyn þat newe religion, founden of synful men & gadrid of many errouris, of foolis & worldly, proude & coueitise wrecchis, is best; & þerfore þei leuen cristis religion in his owene fredom, & bynden¹ hem bi singuler profession to synful foolis. & ȝit crist & his apostlis tauten neuere ne vseden siche profession. & herfore many children ben brouȝt to siche newe religion for loue of worldly pride & welfare of body more þan for holy lif to serue god in penaunce & clennessse of soule, & sum ben stolen þefly fro here frendis, & summe bi false lesyngis & false bihestis brouȝt þer-to, & for-þinke it after, & be not suffred to turne to cristis clene religion, þouȝ þei ben vnable to þis newe religions maade of synful mennus *ordynaunce; & so in summe manere þei ben nedid to be dampnyd for ypocrisie & grucchyng of conscience, & leuyng of betre þing & holdyng forþ of þe worse wyttyngly. ¶ Trewe clerkis seyn also þat cristis lyuyng & his apostlis in wilful pouert, wiþ-outen fals & nedeles beggyng & whiþ-outen worldly lordischípis, is most perfit in itself & best for alle clerkis, siþ crist god & man chees þis² lif for þe beste; & he myȝtte not erre neiþer in

Some lords maintain wrong by force.

True clerks strive for Holy Writ.

Hypocrites study man's law.

True clerks maintain Christ's order.

Hypocrites say new religion is better.

*[p. 197 MS.]

True clerks set Christ's living as a pattern for priests.

¹ byndem X.

² omitted X.

Possessioners
have lands,

but do not rule
as lords,

or teach as
priests.

Lords misled by
these hypocrites.

pouȝt ne in word ne dede, but summe ypocritis seyn aȝenst þis in worde or dede or boȝe, þat it his best to feyne holy pouert affir crist & his apostlis, & þer-wiþ lyuen in lustis of worldly gaynesse, of costly¹ housynge & grete more þan lordis don, & in costly cloþing for ony lord, & in cost of mete or drynke & makynge of grete festis of riche men. & þis lif þei holden vp bi fals beggyng of pore men, þat may not wel paie here rentis to lordis & here dymes & offryngis to curatis & meyntene here wif & children & leue out of dette, traueile þei neuere so besily nyȝt & day. & be þei neuere so pore & in grete dette þes ypocritis ceessen not to robbe hem bi fals beggyng, dampned of goddis lawe. oþere ypocritis seyn in dede þat it is betre for clerkis to haue worldly rentis & lordischipis dowid to hem & parische chirchis appropriid to hem² bi symonye & lesyngis þan to lyue in wilful & honest pouert as crist & his apostlis diden. & ȝit þei reulen not wele þe peple, as lordis schulden, but seyn þat þei ben dede to þe world; &³ techen not þe peple goddis lawe in word & ensauple as prestis schulden, but seyn it falleþ not to hem to preche; & þei traueile not for here liflode, as god enyoyned adam for his penaunce, & poul traueiled wiþ his hondis in nede for his sustenaunce, but þei lyuen comynly in ydelnesse & glotonye & enuye & many oþer synnys, & feynen holynesse in syngynge, in preynge of mouþ & customes maad of mannus errour, more þan in lyuynge after cristis gospel. & whanne trewe clerkis meyntenen here trewe part bi holy writt & reson & ensauple of cristis lif & his apostlis, & newe ypocritis meyntenen here fals part bi ground of synful men & bi ypocrisie & worldly power & ȝiftis of money & censures, as suspendynge, cursynge & prisonynge, & þanne is debat & strif reised at þe fulle. for many lordis & grete men ben disceyued bi þe multitude of ypocritis, & many blente bi ȝiftis of money & worldly profitis þat þei geten of þes ypocritis, & summe bi fleschly loue & worldly frendischipe, & for þat fewe stonden wiþ þe trewþe & but fewe

¹ gostly X.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

lordis or riche cristene men stonden bi goddis lawe & profit of cristene mennus soulis for to wyne þe blisse of heuene; & þerfore pore clerkis ben sclaunderid for heretikis, for þei seyn þe treuþe of holy writt, & hurlid & cursid & prisonyd & lettid to preche þe gospel, for drede laste þei warne þe peple after cristis techynge of þe *false disceitis of anticrist & his worldly & proude & coueitouse clerkis. & þus str[i]ues & debatis ben reised & meyntened in oure lond.

Poor priests are persecuted.

*[p. 198 MS.]

¶ Also diuerse gilis or disceitis & falsnesses rengnen moche in oure lond; for prelatis hiden þe gile of here symonye & ypocrisie, þat vnneþis comeþ ony to ony grete benefice wiþouten symonye, priuy or apert; & þus alle prestis & lordis & comyns also ben enuynmed wiþ heresie of cursid symonye, & prelatis þat schulden distroie synne & chase it¹ out of londe wolen meyntene men in synne of lecherie & opere fro ȝeer to ȝeer for a pencion bi ȝere, & clepen þis holy correction; & þei ben wode ȝif ony lord or opere myȝtty man lette hem of þis correction, þe whiche is roberie & extortion. In confessouris regneþ moche gile for þei conforten & norischen grete men of þis world in here synnys for to gete a benefice, worldly wynnynge or frendischipe or lustis of² here stynkyng bely, & vnder colour of holynesse leden men to þe ȝatis of helle & sellen soulis to sathanas for drit of worldly goodis & wombe ioie for a while; for þei doren not telle hem þe soþe & gretnesse of here foule synnys & horiblite of peynes of helle, & forsake here companye whanne þei wolen dwelle stille in here synne, leste þei lese worldly³ worschipe & lustis þat þei seken more þan to saue cristene soulis. In men of lawe regneþ moche gile, for þei meyntenen⁴ falsnes for wynnynge & maken lordis to⁴ meyntene wrongis & don wrongis whanne lordis hopen to do riȝt & plese god, & bi here coueitise & falsnesse þei purchasen londis & rentis ynowe and don many extorsions & beren don þe riȝt boþe of pore & riche, & ȝit þei maken it so⁵ holy in signes outward,

Simony in prelates.

Sin-rents.

Confessors flatter for selfish reasons

Deceitfulness of lawyers.

¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

³ omitted X.

⁴⁻⁴ omitted X.

⁵ omitted X

as ȝif þei weren angelis of heuene, to colour here falsenesse
 Merchants cheat, & blynde þe peple þerby. ¶ In marchauntis regneþ gile in ful
 grete plente, for þei sweren falsly be alle grete membris of
 crist & bi alle myȝtty god in trinyte þat here chaffere cost so
 moche & is so trewe & profitable, to bigile þe peple & to
 teche ȝonge prentis þis cursed craft, & preisen hym most þat
 most bigileþ þe peple, & hiden here vsure & colouren it bi
 sotil cautelis of þe fend þat fewe men may proue þis vsure &
 so do servants; amende hem þer-of bi-fore þe day of dom. ¶ In seruauntis
 regneþ gile, for þei traueilen faste awhile in presence of here
 maister, & in absence ben ydel & iapen & don litel good, &
 sweren faste þat þei may not labore troweliere & bisiliere þan
 but most of all þei don. & ȝit generaly in clerkis regneþ most gile, for þei
 the clergy, who sell vain
 prayers and
 pardons. disceyuen men bi here veyn preieris & pardons & indulgencis,
 for þei knowen not þe goodnesse of here preieris ne abilnesse
 of men þat þei preien fore, but þei owen to drede sore þat þei
 stiren god to vengauce for here owene wickid lif; & þer
 comeþ no pardon but of god for good lyuyng & endyng in
 * [p. 199 MS.] charite, & þis schal not be bouȝt * ne solde as prelatis chafferen
 þes dayes; for who is in most charite is beste herde of god,
 be he schepeherde or lewid man, or in þe chirche or in þe
 feld; & who kepiþ wel þe hestis of god schal haue pardon
 & þe blisse of heuene, & noon oþere for creature vnder god.
 & þus gile regneþ in many statis & personys þat oure lond
 may drede sore a conquest, But ȝif synne & gile be chasid out
 & treuþe & charite meyntened soone.

Duties of lords. but now be lordis wel war þat þei don mercy & charite
 & good conscience to her seruauntis, for ellis þei schulle gete
 no mercy ne loue of god, for wrong oppressyng of pore
 men axiþ vengauce of god, as doþ wrong mansleyng; & loke
 lordis þat þei reule wel seruauntis & tenauntis, þat þei drede
 They should set
 good example. god & his wraþþe þe more, & flee synnys & lyue vertuously &
 in treuþe anemtis god & man; for lordis owen to ȝeue holy
 ensauple of lif to seruauntis & sugetis, & ponysche hem for
 here wickid lif anemtis god more þan for falsnesse of dispit

don aȝenst here owene persone or worldly profit; & to preise, cherische¹ & loue & rewarde hem for here holy lif & treuþe more þan for pleisynge of here owene persone or for doynge of here worldly auauntage or profit. & þus schullen lordis þat ben vertuous in hem self norische vertuous seruauantis & trewe to god & man, & reproue & ponysche wickid trecchouris² & cursed of lif; & þus schulde synne among hem & oþere be hurlid out & trouþe & vertuous lif meyntened & cherischid. ¶ Also lordis schullen don non extorsions to here pore seruauantis bi ne worldly lawe ne customes, for alle þes lawes & customes ben noþing worþ but ȝif þei ben reulid bi charite & good conscience; & lordis owen to procure good & reste & pees to here seruauantis as goode fadris & helperis, & suffre not here stiwardis or ony officeris to don hem wrong. for siþ þei may distroie þis wrong³ & don not, þei ben fautoris & meyntenors of þis wrong, & schulle be ponyschid as þe doeris, as seynt poul seiþ, & in many cas more scharply, for here meyntenynge doþ more harm & wrong þan þe wickid stiwardis bi hem-self; for seynt poul seiþ pleyndly þat he þat haþ not cure or kepynge of his owene, & most of his owene homly meyne,⁴ haþ forsaken þe feiþ & is worse þan an heþene man. of þis it semeþ opynly þat þat lord þat chargiþ⁵ not what wrong or extorsions his officeris don vnder hym forsakiþ þe riȝte feiþ & is worse þan an heþene man; for he doþ more harm to a cristene man, & distroieþ more cristene religion, & makith hate & grucchyng & discencion bitwixe pore & riche, & anemtis god; for þei myȝten soone enquere of trewe men of þe contre þe falsnesse of here officeris & amende hem, ȝif þei loueden treuþe of god * & riȝtful helpe of pore men as moche as þei * [p. 200 MS.] louen helpe of here body & holsumnesse of here bodily mete; & but ȝif þei don þus þei fallen out of charite as it semeþ, for þei louen more ellis here bely & hem self þan þe honour of crist & riȝtful gouernaile of goddis peple. & lordis schulden warne here officeris þat ȝif þei don wrong to here pore

Not to use bad laws for the oppression of their servants,

or let their officers do wrong.

Rom. i. [32.]

1 Timothy v. [8.]

¹ chirch X.

² treccherous X.

³ omitted X.

⁴ omitted AA.

⁵ chargid X.

Lords are deceived who go to matins and do not look after their officers.

Prov. xxi. 3.

No use writing letters to evil officers, who know they may safely disregard them.

Lords ought to keep the clergy in order.

tenauntis þei schulden be put out of here offices & lese here frendischiþe & lordischiþe, & þanne wolden officeris of lordis ben war of extorsions & wrong meyntenaunce. & lordis ben foule disceyued to dwelle att home in lustis of glotonye & lecherie & ydelnesse, & to seie here matynes & opere deuociouns in mouþ & not in herte ne dede, & to suffre pore men distroied bi euyl officeris; for god seiþ bi salamon it is betre to do mercy & riȝtful dom þan to offre sacrificies. for þe presence of þe riȝtful lord schulde more distroie wrongis & euyl meyntenaunce þan many letteris sent to euyl officeris, for þei charge not to do riȝt after þe letteris, for þer is no more pursuet don after þe deed lettre. ¶ What is it worþ a lord to crie bi word to god, whanne many pore men axen riȝtfully vengauce aȝenst him for extorsions & wrongis þat he & his officeris don or suffren¹ to be don in his name, whanne he may letten hem; for þan he is consentour or autor of siche wrongis. for god wole sonere here many pore riȝtfully criynge vengauce þan a lord & many ypocritis axynge vnriȝtfully helpe & wynnynge of worldly goodis; for god seiþ þat he wole not here synful men criynge to him in tyme of here nede whanne þei wolen not here pore men & helpe hem in here wrongis & myscheues þat þei ben inne. ¶ Also a grete vnriȝtwisnesse regneþ among lordis whanne þei wolen not distroie pride, coueitise & worldly lif of clerkis þat harmen so moche cristene peple. for ȝif lordis wolden dispise þe pride of coueitouse clerkis & not conferme hem ne² meyntene here worldly lordischiþe & symonye, þat is opynly dampnyd bi holy writt & cristis lyuynge, þes proude worldly clerkis ful of coueitise & lecherie & opere synnes schulden sone ben abatid, & holy lif & trewe techynge schulde be brouȝt aȝen. but here renneþ moche gile & ypocrisie of anticrist & his clerkis, for þei seyn þat seculer lordis han no power vpon clerkis, but ȝif prelatis clepen hem to chastise clerkis whanne þei ben rebel & wolen not ben amendid bi here prelatis. for

¹ suffreþ X.

² no X.

salamon putte adoun on heiȝ prestis & ordeyned anoȝer in his place, & owtlawid þe firste wiȝ-uten axynge helpe of clerkis for traiterie don to salamon & his peple; & treson aȝenst crist & his lawe & his peple is more þan treson aȝenst an erþely kyng & more schulde be ponyschid. & as petir & poul techen, lordis ben ordeyned of god to venge mysdedis and mysdoeris & to preise goode dedis & goode doeris; þanne þe more þat *a
1 Kings ii. [27.]
Example of
Solomon.
 synne is, þe more howen lordis to ponysche it; but þe synne of clerkis is more þan þe synne of oþere lewid men, þanne
Sin of the clergy
is worse than sin
of laymen.
 lordis owen more to ponysche synne of clerkis þanne þe synne of oþer men. & it is more synne & perilous to goddis peple whanne lowere clerkis meyntenen here synne & grete prelatis suffren hem þer-inne, & consenten þer-to for negligence or coueitise, þan whanne prelatis don here bisynesse to distroie synne & pursue wickid clerkis. þer-fore lordis owen to ponysche more wickid clerkis whanne prelatis slepen & faouren hem in synne for moneye,¹ for ellis myȝtten kyngdomes ben conquerid for² negligence of coueitouse prelatis, as it was in þe lond of israel. & herefore whanne crist was preised of þe peple, he wente in-to þe temple & wiȝ his hondis droof out symonyentis, to ȝeue ensaumple to lordis to do þe same; & þerfore petir & poul outaken not clerkis fro ponyschyng of lordis. þanne siȝ goddis lawe ȝeueȝ general power to secular lordis for to ponysche mysdoeris, whi schulden þei not ponysche euyl clerkis, þat most drawen
Clergy ought not
to be exempt
from law.
 oþere men to synne & so to disturblyng of rewmes? siȝ crist suffred paciently wrongful deȝ of pilat, þat was a secular iustise, moche more schulden clerkis suffren riȝtful ponyschyng of here synnys bi secular lordis; for poul forsok
Acts xxv. 11.
 not to take deȝ of secular domes men ȝif he hadde deserued it, & also appellid to þe heȝene emperour of rome; & þus it semeȝ þat þo clerkis þat wolen not be amended bi secular lordis dom ben out of mekenesse & pacience & charite, & hiȝen hemself aboue crist & his apostlis aȝenst goddis ordynance bi luciferis pride, & ben cursed anticristis. & ȝit

¹ meney X.² to X.

Lords give preferment to bad priests,

and employ priests in all sorts of secular work.

*[p. 202 MS.] Still worse are the priests who take such office.

Worst of all are false confessors.

Gentlemen stand by a curate that feasts them, whatever his character.

lordis don gret wrong & gile, for þei auaunsen lewid men of kunnyng & lyuyng to benefices wip care of many¹ soulis, & taken to hem self þe profit of þe grete benefices for many ȝeris, & holden many benefy[c]ed men in here chapelis for nouelrie of newe song, & maken summe prestis stiwardis of here housholde, & summe prestis clerkis of here kechene,² & summe prestis here auditours, & summe prestis tresoreris, & summe aumeneris, & summe stiwardis of here courtis, & summe conseileris & reuleris of here worldly plees, arraies & worldly dedes, as þouȝ no man coude worldly office but þei; & wolen not suffre hem goo teche þe soulis for whiche þe schullen answeere at domes day, & for whiche crist schedde his precious herte blood, but suffren & meynntenen þe wolues of helle to slee cristene mennus soulis bi³ synne, & letten almes dede boþe gostly & bodily, & so þei ben cursed traitours to god & to his prestis & his pore peple. & more traitorie of god & his peple is in þes prestis þat *wilfully & costly procure to haue þis worldly offices & dwellen þer-inne & leuen here gostly office vndon.⁴ but most traiterie of god & his peple is in fals confessouris þat schulden telle lordis þe grete peril of þis synne & opere, & wolden not for drede of loos of worldly frendschipe & lordischipe & worldly worschipe & wynnynge; for þei sette more⁵ bi a litel stynkyng dritt of þis world þan bi helpe of cristene soulis & frendschipe of god & þe blisse of heuene. Also many ietteris of contre þat wolen make hem self gentel men & han litel or nouȝt to lyue onne, & opere lordis also wolen preise a worldly prelat or curat & bere him vp, þouȝ he be neuere so vicious in lecherie, pride & coueitise & opere synnes, so þat þis worldly curat makip hem grete festis & wastip pore mennus almes in ȝiftis of wyn & vanytes; ȝe, þouȝ he be a market betere, a marchaunt, a meyntenour of wrongis at louedaies, a fals suerere, a man-quellere & irreguler. but ȝif þer be a gostly curat or prest þat lyueþ a good lif in mekenesse & doynge almes to pore

¹ mennys AA. ² lecherie X. ³ omitted X. ⁴ undir AA. ⁵ omitted X.

men, & not wastynge pore mennus almes in veyn feste or suche getteris, but holde hym in his preieris deuoutly & in techynge of goddis lawe trewely & in his trewe stondynge of holy writt, he schal be holde a nyggard, an hound, or an hoog, an ypocrite & an heretik; namely ȝif he reproue hem of here wickid lif & teche hem þe beste weie to heuene boþe in word & dede, & so be hurlid & pursued priuely or apertly, & so hatid amonge hem þat he schal be fayn to sette his chirche to ferme to suche a gettere nerehonde for nouȝt, or ellis for fals sclaundre putt on him lese his chirche, or for schame or anoy flee þe contre, & bi þis wrong ben many men lettid fro goddis seruyce & trewe techynge. And ȝit lordis don many wrongis & giles in here offices, for þei wasten here tyme in slouþe & ydelnesse, & wasten here goodis in bost & pride & glotonye; & he þat best can do þis is holden of worldly men best lord & most worschipful, principaly ȝif he meyntene his men to bete pore men & do wrongis bi loue daies, holdynge & meyntenynge of causes þat riȝt & lawe may not haue his cours. & þus whanne þei schulden haue household of riȝtwise men & vertuous of lif, þei meyntenen proude luciferis children, extorsioneris, robberies, & reuers, to distroie here pore neiȝebore & maken here hous a den of þeues, & ben procuratours of þe fend to holde vp falsnesse & opere synnes, & to putte doun goddis lawe¹ & his seruauntis. for lordis schulden traueile als faste to kunne holy writt, & do treuþe & equitye, & meyntene riȝt of pore men * & reste & pees * [p. 203 MS.] vp here kunnyng & power, as pore men ben bisi to labore for here owene liflode & to paye here rentis to lordis; for god seiþ bi dauid: “& now, ȝe kyngis, vnderstonde; be ȝe lerid þat demen þe erþe; serue ȝe to þe lord wiþ drede of herte, & enyoie ȝe to hym wiþ quakyng.” & þe wise man seiþ þat þe most hard dom schal ben to hem þat ben aboue opere, & ihū seiþ þat to whom is moche bitokene, of hym schal moche ben axid. god stireþ² lordis to distroie synne & norische yrtues & holy lif of clerkis & alle opere³ sugetis. Amen.

but a priest who
lives poorly, and
does his duty,
is insulted and
annoyed.

Lords keep up
trains of ill-con-
ducted ruffians.

Psalms ii. 10.

Wisdom vi. 6.

Luke xii. 48.

¹ omitted X.

² stire AA.

³ pere AA.

XVI.

WHY POOR PRIESTS HAVE NO BENEFICE.

THIS tract, whoever may be its author, is vigorously written. It has a special interest as a full statement and defence of the motives which led Wyclif to institute his order or company of poor priests.

As evidence in favour of Wyclif's authorship, we may notice the phrase "moo sacraments than Christ used and his apostles." In the *Dialogus* we find complaints that sacraments are multiplied so as to be a burden to the Church, and Confirmation and Extreme Unction are said not to have enough ground in Scripture to be necessary to salvation (*Trial*, book iv. chapters xi., xiv., xxv.). His doctrine of dominion is brought in on p. 247. Perhaps we may see a touch of personal feeling in the statement that a curate cannot get leave of absence to study God's law without payment. Had Wyclif found it necessary to buy leave to absent himself from Fillingham in 1368?

On the other hand, the tone of several passages would lead us to attribute them to one of the poor priests rather than to Wyclif. It seems unlikely that the rector of Lutterworth would speak of a man who accepted a cure as binding himself "to o synguler place as a tey dogge," p. 252.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

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Whi pore prestis han none benefice.

Capitulum primum.

Summe causes meuen summe pore prestis to resceyue not benefices; þe friste for drede of symonye, þe secunde for drede of myspendynge pore mennus goodis, þe þridde for drede of lettyng of better occupacion þat is more liȝt or eisy, more certeyn, & more profitable on euere side. for ȝif men schulde come to benefices be ȝift of prelatis þer is drede of symonye; for comynly þei taken the friste fruytis or oþere pensions, or holden curatis in office in here courtis or chapelis or oþere veyn offices, fer fro prestis lif tauȝt & ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis; so þat comunly siche benefices comen not frely, as crist comaundiȝ, but rapere for worldly wynnynge or flaterynge or preisyng & þank of myȝtty men & lordis, & not for abilnesse of kunnyng of goddis lawe¹ & trewe techynge of þe gospel & ensaumple of holy lif. & here-fore comynly þes prelatis & resceyueris ben foulid wiȝ symonye, þat is cursed heresie as goddis lawe & mannus lawe techen opynly & many seyntis. & grete merueile it is now þat, siȝ seynt gregory seyȝ in pleyn lawe of þe chirche & oþere bokis þat siche men as desiren benefices schulden not haue hem, but men þat fleen hem for drede of vnabilnesse of hemself & grete charge, as dide moyses, ieromye, austyn, gregory & holy seyntis; & now who can faste renne to rome & bere gold out of þe lond & paie it for deed leed & a litil writynge, & stryue & plede & curse for tiȝes & oþere temperal profitis, þat ben clepid wiȝ anticristis clerkis riȝttis of holy chirche, schal haue grete benefices of cure of many þousand soulis; þouȝ² he be vnable of kunnyng of holy writt, not in wille to teche & preche his sugetis, but of cursed lif & wickid ensaumple of pride, of coueitise, glotonye, lecherie & oþere grete synnys. but þere be ony symple man þat desireȝ to lyue wel & teche

Causes why poor priests do not take benefices.

Prevalence of simony.

Gregory.

Benefices bought at Rome.

¹ omitted X.

² þei X.

True priests
persecuted.
*[p. 204 MS.]

Lords keep
curates in their
own service.

Indirect bribery.

Bad influence of
some ladies.

treuely goddis lawe & dispise pride & opere synnys, boþe of *prelatis* & opere men, he¹ schal ben holden an ypocrite, a newe techere, an heretik, & not suffred to come *to ony benefice. but ȝif² he have² ony litel pore place to lyuen a pore lif onne, he schal be so pursued & sclaudrid þat he schal be putt oute bi wiles, cautelis, fraudis & worldly violence, & enprisoned, disgratid or brent, ȝif *anticristis* clerkis may for ony gold & cursed lesyngis. ¶ And ȝif lordis schullen presente clerkis to benefices þei wolen haue comynly gold in grett quantite, & holden þes curatis in here worldly office, & suffren þe wolues of helle to stranglen mennus soulis, so þat þei haue moche gold & here office don for nouȝt, & here chapelis holden vp for veyn glorie or ypocrisie; & ȝit þei wolen not presente a clerk able of kunnyng & of³ good lif & holy ensauple to þe peple, but a kechen clerk or a penne clerk or wis of⁴ bilyng of castelis or worldly doynge, þouȝ he kunne not rede wel his sauter & knoweþ not þe comaundementis of god ne sacramentis of holy chirche. & ȝit summe lordis to colouren here symonye wole not take for hem self, but keuerchiefs for þe lady, or a palfray, or a tonne of wyn; & whanne summe lordis wolden presente a goode man & able for loue of god & cristene soulis, þan summe ladies ben menys to haue a daunsere, a trippere on tapitis, or hunttere or haukere, or a wilde pleiere of someres gamenes for flaterynge & ȝiftis goynge bitwixe, & ȝif it be for daunsynge in bedde so moche þe worse. & þus it semeþ þat boþe *prelatis* & lordis comynly maken a cursed *anticrist* & a quyke fend to be maister of cristis peple, for to leden hem⁵ to helle, to sathanas here maistir, & suffre not cristis disciplis to teche cristis gospel to his children for to saue here soulis; & so þei traueilen to exile crist & his lawe out of his heritage, þat is cristene soulis, þat he bouȝte not wiþ roten gold ne siluer but wiþ his precious herte blood þat he schedde on þe crois bi most brennyng charite. but in þis presentynge of euyl curatis and holdynge

¹ omitted AA.

²⁻² omitted X.

³ omitted AA.

⁴ omitted X.

⁵ omitted X.

of curatis in worldly office, lettynge hem fro here gostly cure, ben þre degrees of *traiterie* aʒenst god & his peple. ¶ Þe friste is in *prelatis* & lordis þat þus holden curatis in here worldly office; for þei han here heiʒe statis in þe chirche & lordischipis for to purueie treue curatis to þe peple, & to meyntene hem in goddis lawe & ponyschen hem ʒif þei failen in here gostly cure, & bi þis þei holden here lordischipis of god. þan ʒif þei maken euyl curatis & holden hem in here worldly office, & letten hem to lede goddis peple þe riʒtful weie to heuene, but helpen hem & constreynen hem to lede þe peple to helle ward bi wiþ-drawynge of goddis word & bi euyl ensauple ʒeuyng, þei ben weiward *traitours* to god & his peple, & vikeris & *procuratours* of sathanas. ʒit more *traiterie* is in false curatis þat ʒeuen mede *or hire to comen in-to siche worldly offices, for to spare here muk & leie it in tresor, & to gete lordischipe & mauntenaunce aʒenst ordynaries, þat þei doren not clepen hem to residence & saue here soulis, but couchen in lordis courtis, in¹ lustis & aise of here flech for to gete moo fatte benefices, & purposen not spedly to do here gostly office. woo is to þo lordis þat ben leed wiþ suche cursed heretikis &² *anticristis*, *traitours* of god & his peple, & namely *traitours* to lordis hem self. where lordis myʒtten not fynde in alle here lordischipe trewe worldly men to reule here houshold & worldly offices, but ʒif þei taken þer-to curatis þat ben opynly false *traitours* to god & his peple? where lordis ben so blyndid³ þat þei perceyuen not þat siche *traitours*, þat opynly ben false to god, þat þei wolen moche more ben false to hem? but þe most *traiterie* is in fals confessouris, þat schulden bi here office warne *prelatis* & lordis of þis grete peril, & clerkis also, þat þei holden none siche curatis in here worldly offices; for þei don not þis last þei losen lordischipe & frendischipe & ʒiftis & welfare of here stynkyng bely; & so þei sillen *cristene* soulis to sathanas for to haue lykyngis of here stynkyng bely, & maken *prelatis* &

Three degrees of treachery.

1. Lords who keep the clergy in secular office.

Lordships held of God.

*[p. 205 MS.]

2. Curates who buy office,

to gain exemption from the ordinary.

Lords might find secular men to look after their household.

3. False confessors

¹ & X.

² omitted X.

³ byndid AA.

lordis & curatis to lyue *in synne* & *traiterie* aȝenst god & his peple. & so aȝenst þe hire þat lordis ȝeuen here confessouris
 deceive lords. þei disceyuen hem in here soulis helþe, & meynntenen hem
 in cursed *traiterie* of god & his peple, & þus almost al þe world goþ¹ to helle for þis cursed symonye & false confes-
 Prevalence of simony, sours. for comynly *prelatis*, lordis & curatis ben enuened wip þis heresie of symonye, & neuere don *verey* repentaunce & satisfaccion *þer-fore*; for whanne þei han a fat benefice
 and persistence in it. geten by symonye þei forsaken it not, as þei ben bounden bi here owene lawe, but wittingly vsen forþ þat symonye, & lyuen in riot, coueitise, pride, & don not here office neiþer in good ensaumples ne trewe techynge. & þus *anticristis* clerkis, enemyes of crist & his peple, bi money & flaterynge & fleschly loue gedrynge to hem ledynge of þe peple, & forbarre trewe prestis to teche hem goddis lawe; & þerfore þe blynde lediþ þe blynde & boþe partis rennen *in-to synne*, & ful many to helle. & it is huge wonder þat god of his riȝtwisnesse distroieþ not þe housis of *prelatis* & lordis & curatis, as sodom & gomor, for þis heresie, extorsions & oþere cursednesses þat þei haunten, & for drede of þis synne & many moo summe pore wrecchis resceyue no benefices *in* þis world.

Capitulum 2^m.

Poor priests fear to take benefices lest they should waste the goods of the poor.

*[p. 206 MS.]

1 Tim. vi. [8].

Jerome.

Induction fees.

ȝit þouȝ pore prestis myȝtten frely geten *presentacion* of lordis to haue benefices wip cure of soulis, þei dreden for² *myspendynge* of poore *mennus* goodis; & þis is more drede þan *þe first as³ *anemtis* here owene *personys*. for prestis owen to holde hem paied wip fode & hilynge, as seynt poul techiþ; & ȝif þei han more it is pore *mennus* goode, as here owene lawe & ierom & goddis lawe seyn, & þei ben kepers *þer-of* & *procuratours* of pore men. But for *institucion* & *induccion* he schal ȝeue moche of þis god þat is pore *mennus* to *bischopis* officers, *archdekenes* & *officialis* þat ben to riche,

¹ aboute has been inserted in X. but crossed out. ² of X. ³ omitted X.

& not frely comen *per-to*.¹ And whanne bischopis & here officeris comen & feynen to visite, þouȝ þei norischen men in open synne for annuel rente, & don not here office but sillen soulis to sathanas for money, wrecchid curatis ben nedid to festen hem richely & ȝeue procuracie & synage; ȝe, aȝenst goddis lawe & mannus & reson & aȝenst here conscience. & also þei schullen not be suffrid to teche treuly goddis lawe to here owene sugetis & warne hem of false prophetis, & disceyuen² hem boȝe in bileue & techynge & good lif & erþely goodis, as crist doȝe in þe gospel, & comaundiȝ curatis to do þe same vp peyne of here dampnacion; for þanne þei mosten crie to þe peple þe grete synnys of prelatiſ & oþere newe feyned religious, as god biddiȝ; but þei demen þat sicke sadde reprouyngis of synne is enuye, sclaudrynge of prelatiſ, & distroiynge of holy chirche. & þei schullen not be suffrid to do scharp execucion of goddis lawe aȝenst here sugetis, ben þei neuere so opynly cursed of god & sclaudris of cristene religion, ȝif þe heiȝe clerkis of anticrist han ȝiftis & pensions bi ȝere to sufere cursed men in opyn avoutrie & oþere synnys. for whanne þei ben falsly amendid bi officialis & denes no man be hardy to waken hem out of here lustis of synne, for þat schulde distroie iurdiccioun & wyngynge of³ prelatiſ, & þis cursed extorsion is clepid bi ypocrisie þe grete almes of anticristis clerkis⁴; but here-by þei maken large kechenes, holden fatte hors & houndis & haukis & strompetis gaiely arraied, & suffren pore men to sterue for myschief, & ȝit suffren & constreinen hem to goo þe brode weie to helle.

¶ Also many tymes here patrons & oþere getteris of countre & ydel schaueldouris willen loke to be festid of sicke curatis, & ellis maken hem lese þat litel þing þat þei & pore men schulden lyue bi; so þat þei schullen not spende þe dymes & offryngis after good conscience & goddis lawe but waste

Visitation fees.

They are not allowed to speak out.

Nor use church censures freely.

Adulterers protected by the officials and deans to whom they pay rent.

Curates have to feast their patrons and other idle vagabonds.

¹ of X.² disceyuen AA. Perhaps it should be disseruen. If not we must read "that" for "and" just before.³ for X.⁴ omitted X.

hem on suche myȝtty & riche men & ydel, & ellis, for *traueile*, cost & enemyte & dispisyng *þat* þei schullen suffre & on þe toþer side for drede of conscience, hem is betre to forsake al þan to holde it forþ. ¶ Also eche good day comynly þes smale curatis schullen haue *letteris* fro here ordynaries to *summone** & to curse pore men for nouȝt but for coueitise of *anticristis* clerkis; & but ȝif þei somonen & cursen hem, þouȝ þei knowe no cause whi anemtis god & his lawe, þei ben hurlid & somnyd fro day to day, fro fer place to ferþere, or cursed ¹or lese here benefices or profitis ¹*þer*-of; for elles as *prelatis* feynen þei ²bi here rebelte schulden soone distroie *prelatis* iurisdiction, power & wynnynge. ¶ Also whanne pore prestis first holy of lif & deuout *in* here preieris ben benefised, but ȝif þei ben worldly & bisy aboute þe world to make grete festis to riche personys & vikeris & riche men & costly & gaily arraied, as ³here staat axiþ bi fals dom of þe world, þei schullen be hatid & hayned doune as houndis, & eche man redi to peiere hem *in* name & worldly goodis. & so many cursed disceitis haþ *anticrist* brouȝt vp bi his worldly clerkis to make curatis to ⁴myspende pore mennus goodis & not don ⁵trewely here office, or ellis to forsaken al & late *anticristis* clerkis, as lordis of þis world, ȝe more cruely þan *opere* tirauntis, robbe þe pore peple bi feyned sensures & teche þe fendis lore boþe bi open *prechyng* & ensauple of here *cursid* lif. ¶ Also ȝif sicke curatis ben stired to gone lerne goddis lawe & teche here parischenys þe gospel, comynly þei schullen gete no leue of bischopis but for gold; & whanne þei schullen most profite *in* here lernynge þan schulle þei be clepid hom at þe *prelatis* wille, & ȝif þei schullen haue ony heiȝe sacramentis or poyntis of þe heiȝe *prelatis*, comynly þei schulle bie hem wiþ pore mennus goodis wiþ hook or wiþ crok; & so þere is ful gret peril of euyl spendynge of þos goodis, boþe aȝenst heiȝe *prelatis*, anemtis riche men of contre, as *patrones*, *persones* & *opere* gettouris of contre, & here owene kyn for fame of þe

*[p. 207 MS.]

Obliged to pronounce unjust curses,

or themselves are summoned and harassed.

A devout priest who does not give feasts is hated.

Not allowed leave of absence for study.

Pay for ordinations or appointments.

¹ omitted AA.⁴ omitted X.² þer AA.⁵ omitted X.³ & X.

world & for schame & euyl demynge of men. & certis it is gret wonder þat god suffriþ so longe þis synne vnponyschid opynly, namely of *prelatis* courtis þat ben dennys of þeues & larderis of helle; & so of here officeris þat ben sotil in malice & coueitise; & of lordis & myȝtty men, þat schulden distroie þis wrong & oþere & meyntenen treuþe & goddis seruauentis, & now meyntenen *anticristis* falsenesse & his clerkis for part of þe wynnyng. & hou symple prestis durren take sicke benefices, but ȝif þei weren myȝtty of kunnyng & goode lif & herty to aȝenstonde þes wrongis & moo þan¹ we may now touche for þe multitude of hem & sotil colouryng bi ypocrisie. but certis god suffriþ sicke ypocritis & tirauntis to haue name of *prelatis* for grete synnys of þe peple & vnworþinesse þer-of, þat eche part lede oþer² to helle bi blyndnes of þe fend; & þis is a þousand fold more vengauce þan ȝif god distroie bodely boþe partis & alle here goodis * & erþe þer-wiþ, as he *[p. 208 MS.] dide bi sodom & gomor; for þe lengere þat þei lyuen þus in synne, þe grettere peynes schullen þei haue in helle but ȝif þei amenden hem. & þis drede & many moo maken summe pore prestis to resceyuen non benefices.

Prelates' courts
are larders of
hell.

Capitulum 3^m.

But ȝit þouȝ pore prestis myȝtten haue frely presentacion of lordis, & ben holpen bi meyntenynge of kyngis & helpe of goode comyns fro extorsions of *prelatis* & oþere myspendynge of þes goodes, þat is ful hard in þis grete regnyng of *anticristis* clerkis; ȝit þei dreden sore þat bi þis singuler cure ordeyned of synful men þei schulden be lettid fro betre occupacion & fro more profit of holy chirche, & þis is þe moste drede of alle as anemtis here personys. for þei han cure & charge at þe fulle of god to helpe here breþeren to heuene ward, boþe bi techynge, preiynge & ensauple ȝeuyng; & it semeþ þat þei schullen most esily fulfille þis bi general cure of charite, as dide crist & his apostlis, þouȝ þei bynden hem They can do

Poor priests fear
that a cure would
hinder them from
better service.

¹ þat X.

² open X.

more good when
not chained to
one place.

Matthew x. 23.
Can escape per-
secution.

They live by alms,
which is more
Christlike than
taking tithes.

Thus men would
give alms more
freely,

there would be
fewer lawsuits.

Benefices lead
priests into
worldly busi-
ness.

*[p. 209 MS]

not to o synguler place as a tey dogge, & bi þis þei may most sikirly saue hem self & helpe here breþeren; for now þei ben free to flee fro o cite to a noþer whanne þei ben pursued of anticristis clerkis, as biddiþ crist in þe gospel. Also nowe þei may best wiþ-oute chalyngynge of men goo & dwelle among þe peple where þei schullen most profite, & in couenable tyme come & goo aftir stiryng of þe holy gost, & not be bounden bi synful mennus iurdiccion fro þe betre doyng.

¶ Also now þei suen crist & his apostlis neer, in þus takynge almes wilfully & frely of þe peple þat þei techen, þanne in takynge dymes & offryngis bi customes þat synful men ordeynen & vsen now in þe tyme of grace. ¶ Also þis is more medeful in boþe sidis as þei vnderstonden bi cristis lif & his apostlis; for þus þe peple zeueþ hem almes more wilfully & deuoutly, & þei taken it more mekely & ben more besy to lerne, kepe & teche goddis lawe, & so it is þe betre for boþe sidis. ¶ Also bi þis manere myȝtte & schulde þe peple zeue frely here almes to trewe prestis þat trewely kepten here ordre & frely & opynly tauȝten þe gospel, & wiþ-drawen it fro wickede prestis, & not be constreyned to paie here tiþes & offryngis to open cursed men &¹ meyntene hem in here opyn cursednesse; & þus schulde symonye, coueitise & ydelnesse of worldly clerkis be leid doun, & holynesse & trewe techynge & knowynge of goddis lawe be brouȝt in, boþe in clerkis & lewid men. ¶ Also þus schulde stryuyng, pledyng & cursyng for dymes & offryngis & hate & discord among prestis & lewid men be endid, & vnyte, pees & charite meyntened & kept. ¶ Also þes benefices bi þis cours þat men vsen nowe bryngiþ in worldlynnesse & nedeles bisynesse aboute worldly officis, þat crist & his apostlis wolden neuere *take vpon hem; & ȝit þei weren more myȝtty, more witti, & more brennyng in charite to god & to þe peple, boþe to lyue þe best manere in hem self &² to teche oþere men. ¶ Also coueitise & worldly bisynesse³ of clerkis & occasion of coueitise & worldlynnesse of þe peple

¹ X inserts not.

² omitted AA.

³ sikirnesse X.

schulden be don away, & cristis pouert & his apostlis bi
 ensaumple of pore lif of clerkis & triste in god & desiryng
 of heuenely blisse schulde regne in cristene peple. ¶ Also þan
 schulde prestis studie holy writt & be deuout in here preieris,
 & not be taried wiþ newe offices, as newe songis & moo
 sacramentis þan ¹ crist vsede & his apostlis, þat tauzten vs New sacraments.
 alle treuþe & spedly sauynge of cristene peple. ¶ Also mochil
 blasphemye of prelatis & opere men of feyned obedience &
 nedles sweryngis maad to worldly prelatis schulden þan Needless oaths.
 cessen, & souereyn obedience to god & his lawe & eschewynge
 of nedles oþes & forswerynge schulde regne among cristene
 men. ¶ Also þan schulde men eschewe comynly alle þe perilis Summary of the whole.
 seid bifore in þe first chapitre & þe secunde & many þousand
 mo, & lyue in clenness & sikernes of conscience. ¶ Also þan
 schulde prestis be bisy to syke ² goddis worschipe & sauynge
 of mennus soulis, & not here owene worldly glorie & wynnynge
 of worldly drit. ¶ Also þan schulden prestis lyue lich to
 angels, ³ as þei ben angelis of offices, where þei lyuen now as
 swyn in fleschly lustis, & turnen aȝen to here formere synnes
 as houndis to here sp[e]wynge, for habundaunce of worldly
 goodis & ydelnesse in here gostly office & ouere moche
 bisynesse aboute þis wrecchid lif. for þes dredes & many
 þousand mo, & for to be more lich to cristis lif & his apostlis,
 & for to profite more to here owene soules & opere mennus,
 summe pore prestis þenken wiþ goddis helpe ⁴ to traueile
 aboute where þei schulden most profiten by euydence þat god
 zeueþ hem, þe while þei han tyme & litel bodily strengþe &
 ȝouþe. neþeles þei dampnen not curatis þat don wel here Do not condemn good curates.
 office, so þat þei kepen liberte of þe gospel, & dwellen where
 þei schullen most profite, & þat þei techen trewly & stabely
 goddis lawe aȝenst false prophetis & cursed fendis lymes.
 Crist for his endeles mercy helpe his prestis & comyn peple to
 be war of anticristis disceitis, & goo euene þe riȝtte weie to
 heuene. Amen, ihū for þin endeles charite.

¹ þat X.² seke AA.³ an angel X.⁴ omitted X.

XVII.

HOW ANTICHRIST AND HIS CLERKS TRAVAIL TO
DESTROY HOLY WRIT.

THIS tract should be compared with a short fly-leaf printed by Mr. Arnold, S. E. W. III. 186.

I cannot pretend to any sure judgment as to the authorship, but there is nothing in it at variance with Wyclif's teaching. It seems to have been written when the controversy with the poor priests had been carried on some time, and when they found it necessary to justify their constant appeals to God's law (*Talem enim habebant terminum in omnibus suis dictis, semper prætendendo legem Dei; Goddis lawe, Knighton 2664.*) It is possible that the need of such a justification would be soon felt even among the popular preachers, as it must certainly have been discovered very early in the schools. We need not, therefore, assign a very late date to this composition.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	As Christ ordained four Gospels, so Satan has four devices to set men's authority above that of the Gospel. These devices are specially used by friars for the glory of their orders	.....	.....	p. 255
II.	The first false pretence is that the Church is of more authority than the Gospel, since it decreed which gospels should be received			256
III.	The second, that Austin says he would not believe the Gospel, unless the Church told him	.....	.....	258
	Austin's meaning is misrepresented	.....	.....	258
	Duty of maintaining the truth	.....	.....	259
IV.	The third, that men only know the Gospel by the Church	.....	.....	259
	The true ground of faith is Christ himself	260
V.	The fourth, that men believe the Gospel without knowing why	260
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Hou anticrist & his clerkis traueilen to distroie holy writt & to make cristene men vnstable in þe feiþ & to sette here ground in deuēlis of helle.

Capitulum primum.

As houre lord ihū crist ordeynede to make his gospel sadly knowen & meyntened aȝenst heretikis & men out of bileue bi writtynge of his foure euaungelistis, so þe deuēl sathanas castiþ bi anticrist & his worldly false clerkis to distroie holy *writt & cristene mennus bileue bi foure cursed weies or fals resons. ¶ Þe first, þat þe chirche is of more auctorite & more credence þan is ony gospel. ¶ Þe secunde, þat austyn seiþ þat he wolde not bileue to þe gospel but ȝif þe chirche tauȝte hym so. ¶ Þe þride, þat no man now on lyue wote whiche is þe gospel but ȝif it be bi approuynge of þe chirche. ¶ Þe fourþe, ȝif men seyn þat þei bileuen þat þis is þe gospel of matheu or ion, þei axen, whi bileuest þou þat þis is þe gospel; as who seiþ, þer is no cause but for þe chirche confermeþ it & techeþ so. Þes foure euydences & many moo makith þe fend to blynde men in bileue, þat þei schulden not knowe whiche is synne, which is vertu, which is treuþe, which is falsnesse, which is good, which is euyl, & which is goddis heste, & which is lesynge of þe fend for to brynge alle men blyndly to helle. & þes newe religious & principaly freris prechen þes euydences & sowen hem among lewid men ¹in contres to stoppe pore prestis & lewid men, ¹þat þei ben not hardy to speke of þe gospel & holy writt & goddis comaundementis & ioies of heuene & of ²synnes & peynes of purgatorie & of helle, lest þei stiren men to rise out of synnys for drede of peynes, & to lyfe in vertuous lif for to haue þe blisse of heuene. & þis disceit in bileue is maad & coniected of þes cursed pharisees for to magnyfie here newe feyned ordres, founden of synful men, not only wiþ cristis clene religion but

Christ ordained his four euangelists to teach the faith.

So Satan has four false reasons to upset it.

*[p. 210 MS.]

1. The Church is of more authority than any gospel.
2. Saying of St. Austin.

3. That we know which are the gospels by the approval of the Church.

4. A sceptical question. Why men should believe any gospel to be such.

These reasons are invented by the devil to blind men as to good and evil.

They are preached by the religious orders, and mostly by friars,

for the glory of the new orders,

¹⁻¹ omitted X.

² omitted X.

for which they
care more than
for saving their
own or other
men's souls.

more þan it or ony part of holy writt; & for¹ þei willen not be conuyct of here pride & ypocrisie & forsake here coueitise & lustis of here bely & here propre wille. þerfore þei wilen rapere renne to helle fullire,² & drawe alle men after hem heedly bi distroiynge of cristene feiþ, þan to come to cristis clene religion wiþ fredam of þe gospel þat is ordeyned of god of endeles wisdom wiþ-outen errour of ony synful man; for þei mosten þan knoweleche here falsenesse & ypocrisie, bi þe whiche þei disceyueden-cristene men fro þe bigyngne of here nouelries til þis tyme. but luciferis pride & coueitise of worldly muk & of heiþ astatys and³ worldly worschipe may not suffre þis mekenes, as men dreden ful sore, for old enuye of sathanas & hard rotyngne in synne.

Capitulum 2^m.

First ground.

See we now hou þei bryngen in þe first cursed ground, þat þe chirche is of more autorite & credence þan is þe gospel.

They point to the
gospels of Nico-
demus and others
which the Church
set aside.

þei seyn þat nychodeme & many moo writen þe gossellis of cristis lif & his techynge, & þe chirche putte hem away & approued þes foure gossellis of matheu, mark, luk & ion.

The Church
might have made
another choice.

þan þe chirche myȝte as wel haue putt out þes foure & approued þe toþere gosselleris; siþ it was in free wille &

*[p. 211 MS.]

power of þe *chirche to reproue & dampne whiche þei wolden & approue & accepte whiche hem lykede; & þerfore men schulden bileue more to þe chirche þan to⁴ ony⁵ gospel.

These heretics
understand by
the Church the
Pope and his
supporters.

¶ First þes fercastyngne heretikus vnderstonden bi þe chirche þe pope of rome & his cardynalis, & þe multitude of worldly clerkis assentyngne to his symonye & worldly lordischipe aboue alle kyngis & emperours of þis world; for ellis it were not to here purpos to magnyfye þe chirche as þei now don.

The Holy Ghost
moved the holy
clergy of the first
times to take
these gospels and
not the others;

þanne trewe men seyn þat þe clergie þat first was kunnyngne & holy of lif was stirid bi þe holy gost to take þes gossellis & charge not cristene peple wiþ mo; siþ þes ben ynowe &

¹ herfore X.

² fulbere AA.

³ of X.

⁴ omitted AA.

⁵ our X.

profitable¹ at þe fulle, & ben figured in many prophecies of goddis lawe; & þes foure witnessis weren acceptid of þe holy gost to þis writynge for many skillis þat we may not telle now; but *certes* þe chirche myȝtte not haue putt away þes gospellis & acceptid þe oþere. for þan it hadde don aȝenst þe dom of god & aȝenst þe treuþe of ihū crist & aȝenst charite of þe holy gost, for to putte away þes witnesses þat knewen more of goddis preuȝte & weren holiere of lif, & to take witnessis not so kunnyng of goddis dom ne so holy of lif ne so meke ne so stable in feiþ & in loue of ihū crist. but þes sotil heretikis traueilen nyȝt & day to ensauple þe multitude of worldly clerkis, þat ben ful of symonye, pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie & oþere synnes, aboue ihū crist & his gospel, for to haue here worldly lif, pride & lustis meyntened, þat no man schulde lette hem in here worldly glorie ne distrurble hem of here lustis, þouȝ þei neuere so foule lien of² god & slaundren his peple. for þei wolen make here cursed lif & heresies to be gospel & bileue of cristene men; but where ben more cursed traitouris to god & his lawe & more perilous & false prophetis to cristene peple? for god comaundiþ vp peyne of his grete curs & deep dampnyng in helle þat no man schal wiþ-drawe fro his lawe ony poynt of treuþe, ne adde þer-to ony nouelrie þat is not approued of þe trinityte, & ihū crist seiþ þat his gospel is euerlastyng testament. But þei wolen for-don it wiþ a styngyng blast of anticristis cursed mouþ. lord, hou doren cristene men meyntene sicke heretikis, aȝenst goddis techyng & pees of cristene peple? sicke weiward heretikis ben ful vnable to reule prelatis & lordis & comyns in schrifte, in prechyng & preyng & oþere poyntis of here soule helpe, for þei disceyuen hem in feiþ & good lif, for to haue here owene pride & coueitise & lustis born vp, & so drawen alle men to helle þat ben reulid bi suche false confessours, false prechours & false conseilours.

but the Church
could not do
otherwise.

These heretics
try to set the
authority of a
worldly clergy
above that of
Christ.

Rev. xxii. 18.

Christians should
not maintain such
heretics.

¹ perfyt AA.

² on AA.

Capitulum 3^m.

The second wheel
in the devil's
wain.

*[p. 212a MS.]

By the Church
Austin means
Christ, and the
apostles and
saints;

but these heretics
understand the
worldly clergy.

St. Austin is
slandered.

Christians should
uphold Christ's

See now þe secunde wheel in þis deuellis wayn; þei bere vpon austyn þat he seiþ þus, *þat he wolde not bileue to þe gospel but ȝif þe chirche seide it. so trewe men answeren þus: suppose¹ þat austyn seiþ þis word, he seide to þis entente, þat but ȝif crist, heuyd of holy chirche, & seyntis in heuene & þe apostlis of crist, þat ben holy chirche, seiden & approueden þis gospel, ellis he wolde not bileue þer-to; & þis vnderstondynge is ful trewe & resonable & accordynge to þe lettere of austyn. but þei vnderstonden þus, but ȝif þe multitude of *cursed* worldly clerkis approue þis for þe gospel, ellis austyn wolde not bileue to þe gospel of ihū crist; & siþ austyn was & is so gret a doctour of holy chirche, no man schulde bileue to þe gospel but ȝif þe chirche of þes prelatiſ confermen þat þis is þe gospel of crist. þanne² ȝif þe multitude of *anticristis* clerkis approuen not þe gospel ne treuþe of holy writt, no man schulde holde³ þe gospel ne ony comaundement of god, ne meyntene ony treuþe aȝenst *anti-crist* & his worldely prelatiſ. but what heresie myȝtte soonere distroie cristene mennus bileue? & god forbede þat austyn were in þis⁴ perilous heresie, or ony cristene man. þerfore it is *cursed* lesynge to sclaunder[re] seynt austin wiþ þis cursed errour, to⁵ coloure here owene false vnderstondynge & heresie bi þis holy doctour. for bi þis cursed wheel, ȝif *anticristis* clerkis dampne cristene mennus feiþ & þe comaundementis of god & poyntis of charite, & bryngen in here owen weiward lawis to holden vp here pride & coueitise, & to curse men for þei don werkis of charite, men moten vp peyne of dampnacion receyue here cursed dedis as bileue, & forsake þe gospel of ihū crist, & take fendis lesyngis in stede of goddis lore; & moo cursednesse to distroie cristene feiþ þan wole sue of þis *cursed* vnderstondynge may no man ne fend ymagyne til þe day of dom. þerfore cristen men⁶ schulden stonde to þe deþ

¹ suppo X.

⁴ omitted X.

² ȝan X.

⁵ omitted X.

³ olde X.

⁶ omitted X.

for meynthyng of cristis gospel, & trewe vnderstondyng gospel to the death, and not put their trust in prelates,
 þer-of geten bi holy lif & gret studie, & not sette here feiþ
 ne triste in synful prelatis & here cursed clerkis, ne in here
 vnderstondyng of holy writt, for þei ben vnable wiþ þis whose spiritual eyes are blinded by luxury.
 worldly lif ful of pride, coueitise, glotony & ydelnesse, as ¹
 haukyng & huntyng, & pleiying at þe chees & tablis, &
 riot & daunsyng, & festis makyng, dronkenesse & lecherie,
 to perceyue þe treuþe of holy writt & heiþe preuytees of god.
 for crist seiþ in þe gospel þat þe fadir of heuene hidip þes Matt. xi. 25.
 treuþes fro worldly wise men & queynte, & schewip hem to
 meke men as weren cristis disciplis. & þe wise man seiþ þat Prov. ix. 10.
 þe wisdom schal not entre in-to an euyl willid man, for þe
 drede of god is bigynnyng & plente of wisdom, & þei han
 not þis drede; þan þei han not þis wisdom. þerfore it is
 luciferis pride, & passeþ it, to constreyne men to take vnder-
 stondyng of holy writt after þe witt & dom of sicke
 worldly *clerkis, þat ben enemys of crist & his lawe & his *[p. 212b MS.]
 seruauantis, for þei ben blynde in goddis lawe & good lif, &
 leden blynde men to helle, as crist seiþ in þe gospel; for in They lead blind men to hell,
 steed of keies of heuene, þat ben kunnyng of holy writt &
 power to distroie synne & saue cristene soulis bi trewe
 techyng & good ensauple, þei han ignoraunce of goddis
 lawe, & no wil² to studie & lyue þer-aftir, but kunnyng &
 practisyng in here owene wickede lawis for pride & coueitise,
 & feynen hem power of tirauntrie to stoppe treue men fro
 prechyng of þe gospel, & ȝif þei prechen aȝenst here wille to
 curse hem & prisone hem & brenne hem³; & certis þes ben of which they have the keys.
 keies of helle.

Capitulum 4^m.

See now þe þridde wheel of sathanas chaar. þes cautelous Third wheel in Satan's car.
 clerkis & religious of lucifer seyn þat no man wot whiche is That men know the gospel only by the Church's approval,
 the gospel but bi approuyng & confermyng of þe chirche.
 but trewe men seyn þat to here vnderstondyng þis is ful of

¹ & X.² wel X.³ omitted AA.

but Christians
have this cer-
tainty given by
Christ,

falsed; for *cristene* men ben *certeyn* of *bileue*, bi *gracious* *ȝifte* of *ihū crist*, þat þis *treuþe* tauȝt bi *crist* & his *apostlis* is þe *gospel*, þouȝ alle *anticristis* *clerkis* *crien* *neuere* so *faste* þe *contrarie* vp *peyne* of *curs* & *prisonynge* & *brennyng*. & þis *bileue* is not *groundid* on þe *pope* & his *cardinalis*, for þanne it *moste* *faile* & ben *vndon*, as þei *failen* & ben *sumtyme* *distroied*, but on *ihū crist*, *god* & *man*, & on þe *holy trinyte*; & so it may *neuere* *faile* but in *defaute* of him þat *schulde* *loue* *god* & *serue* him & *faileþ* in þes two *poyntis*, for *almyȝtty* *god* & his *treuþes* ben *fundement* of *cristene* *mennus* *feiß*.

1 Cor. iii. 11.

And as *poul* *seiþ*, *fundement* may no man *sette* *biside* þat þat is *sette*, þat is *ihū crist*. *þerfore* þouȝ *anticrist* & alle þes¹ *worldly* *clerkis* ben *biried* *depe* in *helle* for here *cursed* *symonye*, *pride*, & *coueitise* & *opere* *synnys*, *ȝit* *cristene* *feiß* *faileþ* not; for þei ben not *ground* *þer-of* but *ihū crist* is *ground* *þer-of*. for he is *oure* *god* & *oure* *beste* *maistre*, *euere* *redy* to *teche* *trewe* men alle þinge þat is *profitable* & *nedful* to here *soulis*; & he may not *faile* in þis *techyng*e but for *vnablete* of him þat *schulde* *resceyue* þis *techyng*e.

who is the only
and unfailing
ground of faith.

Capitulum 5^m.

The fourth wheel
of Belial's cart.

þe *fourþe* *whel* of *belialis* *carte* is þis: *ȝif* *cristene* men *seyn* þei *knownen* bi *bileue* þat þis is *cristis* *gospel*, þes *malicious* *heretikis* *axen* *whi* þei *bileuen* þat þis is *gospel*. but *trewe* men *axen* of hem *aȝenward* *whi* þei *bileuen* þat *god* is *god*; & *ȝif* þei *tellen* a *good* *sufficient* *cause*, *telle* we þe *same* *cause* *whi* we *bileuen* þat þis is *cristis* *gospel*. but þes *heretikis* *wolden* *haue* þis *cause*: for þes *prelatis* *techen* þat þis is *cristis* *gospel*; & þanne² þei *wolden* *haue* of þis *cause* alle here *false* *purpos*, þat *what* *euere* þes *prelatis* *techen* *opynly* & *meyntenen* *stedfastly*, were of as *gret* *autorite* or more þan is *cristis* *gospel*; * & so þei *wolden* *distroie* *holy* *writt* & *cristene* *feiß*, & *meyntenen* þat *what-euere* þei *don* were no *synne*. but *cristene* men *taken* here *feiß* of *god* bi his

Christians believe
in the gospel, as
they do in God.

*[p. 212c MS.]

¹ his X.

² omitted X.

gracious gifte, whanne he ȝeueþ to hem knowynge & vnder-
 stondynge of treuþes nedful for to saue mennus soulis bi, &
 grace to assente in here herte to suche treuþes; & þis men
 clepen feiþ. & of þis feiþ cristene men ben more certeyn þan
 ony man is of ony¹ worldly þing bi ony bodily witt; & þer-
 fore crist reproveþ most defaute of bileue, boþe in þe iewis &
 in his disciplis, & þerfore cristis apostlis preieden² most to
 haue stabilnesse in feiþ; for it is impossible þat ony man plesse
 god wiþ-uten feiþ, & so crist preide principaly þat þe feiþ of
 petir & oþere disciplis schulden not faile endeles; & goddis
 lawe telliþ hou bi feiþ seyntis wrouȝten alle here grete wondris
 & meruailis þat þei diden. & ȝif anticrist seie here þat eche
 man may³ feyne þat he haþ riȝt feiþ & goode vnderstondynge
 of holy writt ȝouyn of god whanne he is in errour, late a
 man seke in alle þingis trewely þe honour of god & lyue iustly
 to god & man, & þanne god wole not faile to him in ony þing
 þat is nedful to hym, neiþer in feiþ ne vnderstondynge ne in
 answeere aȝenst his enemyes. & for feiþ is scheld of cristene
 men aȝenst alle temptacions of þe fend & ground of alle
 vertues, þerfore sathanas ordeyned þes newe sectis to be so
 manye & haue name of kunnyng & holynesse bifore alle
 oþere, & groundiþ in hem pride, enuye, coueitise, glotonye,
 lecherie & ypocrisie to walwe among þe peple & stire hem bi
 word & ensaumples to be vnstable in þe feiþ; & stireþ heiȝe
 worldly prelatis to be fauourable to hem & meynntenen hem in
 þis ypocrisie to coloure here owene synne þer-bi, & to lette
 treue men to preche pleynly & frely cristis gospel & þe hestis
 of god for sauynge of mannus soule. & here-bi & [bi] many
 moo disceitis schulden cristene men knowe how þes newe
 religious ben false prophetis & cursed sectis, of whiche crist
 & his apostlis prophecieden bifore, & tauȝten men to knowe
 hem bi here werkis,⁴ þat ben ypocrisie, coueitise & meyn-
 tenynge of synne bi fals prechyng, flatteryng, fals conseilyng
 & slaunderyng of trewe men,⁵ & makynge⁶ men siker of

By the gift of
God.

What faith is.

Man's need of
faith and its
power.

Satan, to weaken
faith, has raised
up these new
sects,

of which Christ
and his apostles
propheesied.

¹ only X.

⁴ clerkis AA.

² preiseden X.

⁵ omitted X.

³ omitted X.

⁶ maken X.

Letters of fraternity.

2 John 10.

2 Thess. iii. 14.

*[p. 213 MS.]

gostly helpe bi fals letteris of fraternyte & many oþere nouel-
ries brouȝt vp bi ypocrisie & coueitise. & as ion þe euaungelist
comaundiþ, cristene men schulden not resceyue hem in-to here
houses ne seie to hem, heil. & poul biddiþ þat men schulden
not comune wiþ hem, þat þei ben confoundid & schamed of
here false heresie & turne to cristis clene religion wiþ-oute
errour of synful mennus tradicions. God almyȝtty strengþe
his litil flok¹ aȝenst þes foure whelis of sathanas chaar, aȝenst
*anticristis clerkis & helperis, & make hem stronge in riȝtful
feilþ, hope & charite, to seke trewely þe worschipe of ihū crist
& sauynge of mennus soulis; to dispise anticristis bost &
feyned power; & wilfully & ioiefully suffre peyne & reprove²
in þe world for þe name³ of ihū & his gospel, to ȝeue sade
ensaumple to oþere for to folowe & conquere þe heiȝe blisse of
heuene bi glorious martirdom as oþere seyntis diden bifore.
Ihū for þin endeles myȝt, endeles wisdom, endeles goodnesse
& charite, graunte to vs synful wrecchis þis bone. Amen.

¹ folk X.

² reprof AA.

³ þanne AA.

XVIII.

HOW SATAN AND HIS PRIESTS, ETC.

I SEE no reason to deny the authenticity of this tract. In complaining of the manner in which Scripture was wrested to all ends by setting aside its literal sense, Wyclif was insisting on a favourite topic. It is curious, however, to find him maintaining the right of preaching against wicked men by name, since, so far as I know, there is no personal attack in any of his works; the nearest approach to it being his allusions to Spencer's action in heading the Flanders Crusade. It is possible, having regard to the context, to suppose that he means only class names (such as 'prelates,' 'friars,' etc.). He may have been taxed with want of charity in attacking special classes, instead of confining himself to a general denunciation of sin. It seems that in any case his attacks were returned.

Copied from the Corpus MS. X. and collated with the Dublin MS. AA.

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	Three heresies prevalent: 1. That holy writ is false. 2. That it is lawful to lie. 3. That it is uncharitable to denounce sins of great men	p. 264
	The first two are upheld in schools of divinity; the third by prelates and great men	265
II.	They say that holy writ is false, since against both testaments they maintain that the clergy may hold secular lordship	265
	They advocate a false mode of interpretation, refusing the literal sense	266
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III.	Lies are brought in, because prelates and new religious are false, having forsaken the way in which they are bound to live	268
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	Lying in act has led to lying in word	270
IV.	Prelates and false religious say that it is against charity to expose their sins	271
	It is a priest's duty to warn men of their sins	271
	Prelates and religious attack other men in their sermons	273
	But they wish to shut the mouths of reprovers, lest they should lose influence and wealth	273

Hou sathanas & his prestis & his feyned religious casten bi þre cursed heresies to distroie alle good lyuynges & mayntene¹ alle manere of synne.

Capitulum primum.

Three ways to bliss ordained by God.

As almyȝtty god in trinity ordeyneþ men to come to þe blisse of heuene bi þre groundis, bi knowynge of þe trinity bi sad feiþ, bi treue kepyng of goddis hestis, & bi perfit charite & endeles, so sathanas & his worldly clerkis & his feyned religious ful of sotil ypocrisie casten to distroie alle vertuous

Three heresies :

1. That holy writ is false.

2. That it is lawfull to lie.

3. That it is against charity to denounce sins of great men.

Conclusions from these opinions.

lif & iustise, & meyntene alle manere of synne bi þes þre cursed groundes. þe first is þat holy writt is fals; þe secunde þat it² is lefful & medful to lie; þe þridde þat it is aȝenst charite to crie opynly aȝens prelati synnes & oþer myȝtty mennys. for as þei seyn þis is bacbitynge or detraction & sclaudryng, to bryng men out of deuocion to god & holy chirche, & make men of religion of euyl name where þei weren bifore holden goode & holy; & þis prechyng stireþ lordis & oþere men to wiþdrawe worldly goodis fro men of holy chirche, & so hyndriþ goddis seruyce & preieris for þe pees & maken³ discencion & enuye. for ȝif holy writt be fals men may haue noon autorite þer-bi to reproue synne & preise vertues & vertuous lif. & ȝif it be leffel & meritorie to leie, þan no man haþ ground to stire men fro synne bi grete peynes bihiȝte bi cristis word, ne stire men to vertues bi grete ioies of heuene. for siþ it is medful to lie, as þei seyn, crist vsed þis medful craft at þe fulle, & no man may þanne wite in whiche autorite he seide soþ & in whiche he leiȝede. & ȝif it be aȝenst charite to preche & crie openly aȝenst synne of prelati & men of þe chirche & oþere myȝtty men, þan cristis lif & his techynge & his apostlis & prophetes in þe olde lawe & his comaundementis to his prophetis weren aȝenst charite,

¹ meyntenynge X.

² omitted X.

³ sic in both MSS.

ful of detraccion & sclaudrynge. but what heresies myȝtte more blaspheme god, more distroie holy writt & vertuous lif, & more norische synne & cursed men in here lustis? & certis wiȝ-inne þis seuene ȝeer worldly coueitouse clerkis & feyned religious¹ meyntened in scolis of dyuynite two þe firste heresies, & ȝit holden it a noble dede to susteyne hem; * & þe þridde heresie regnyd² þan & ȝit doþ more & more among prelatiſ, feyned religious & lordis & comyns for þe more part. hou stiren suche heretikis & blasphemis god of treuþe to mercy bi here preieris, siȝ god curseþ to here blyssyngis, as he seiþ bi prophete malechie, & here preiere is abhominable & cursed, for þei turnen away & heren not goddis lawe & fulfillen it in dede. hou³ meyntenen lordis þe treuþe of þe gospel & holy writt, siȝ þei meyntenen sicke blaspheme heretikis to be dowid in seculer lordischipe aȝenst goddis comaundement & ensauple of cristis lif & his apostlis? hou doun prestis here office þat schulde witnesse þe treuþe of goddis lawe to suffre peyne & deþ þerfore? hou don comunes here trewe seruyce to god, þat meyntenen sicke heretikis & worschpen hem in word & dede whanne þei owen to knowen here opyn falsnesse? it is grett meruaile þat god of his endles riȝtwisnesse⁴ distroieþ not alle þis cursed peple to helle for þes cursed blasphemyes & erresies⁵ & wickid meyntenyng; but certis þe lengere þat he spareþ bi mercy, þe sorere schal þe vengauce be but ȝif men amenden hem.

Two of these heresies openly * [p. 214 MS] maintained in schools of divinity. The third is prevalent with prelates.

Malachi ii. 2.

Capitulum 2^m.

See now hou þes cursed heretikis bryngen in þe firste blasphemye. first þei seyn & meyntenen þat clerkis may leffully haue seculer lordischpis & lyue in pompe & worldly welfare as lordis. & holy writt old & newe & cristis⁶ lif & his apostlis dampnen þis pride & wrecchednesse in clerkis. & neden hem to mekenesse & wilful traueile & pouert. &

These heretics say that holy writ is false, by supporting things forbidden in Scripture.

¹ omitted X.

² regneþ X.

³ and AA.

⁴ mercy X.

⁵ heretikis X.

⁶ crist X.

many men aleggen faste holy writt azenst þe worldly lif of clerkis; þerfore þei seyn þat holy writt is fals, for trewe men schulden haue noon auctorite azenst here cursed lif. þe

They invent a logic that is contrary to holy writ.

secunde tyme þei fynden vp a newe manere of speche or logik, þat is contrarie to þe speche of holy writt; & for þei wolen meynntenen here owen fyndyng as good & trewe, þerfore þei seyn þat þe speche of holy writt is fals þat reuersiþ¹ here owene fonnydnesse. & here þei maken god a fool & fals, in as moche as in hem is, & schewen hem self wise men & trewe; & algatis feynen hem self wisere & treuere þan god almyȝtty. ¶ þe þridde tyme þei coueten name of wisdom & worschipe of þis world & here owene excellence more þanne goddis honour, & þerfore þei disdeynen to sue mekely þe speche of goddis lawe & þe lif of crist & his apostlis, but maken newe lawis & logik þat maken holy writt derk & fals to þe comyn vnderstondyng of hem & here folweris. & ȝit þei schame sumdel to seie to cristene lordis þat holy writt is

They say that holy writ is not to be taken literally,

but as explained by prelates.

*[p. 215 MS.]

fals, but þei don worse bi sotel ypocrisie þat holy writt is fals to þe wordis but þe vnderstondyng þer-of is trewe; & þis vnderstondyng hangiþ in determinacion of worldly prelatis, þat kunnen not holy writt & ben not able to *haue inspiracion of þe holy gost bi here holy lif, for þei ben comynly ful of symonye, pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie, manquellynge & opere synnys, & open heretikis & enemys of crist & his lawe & his trewe seruauentis. & ihū crist seiþ þat siche ben blynde & leden blynde men in-to þe lake of synne & at þe laste to helle; for ȝif þei han money & gold at here lykyng bi extortion & robberie, þei reken not of cristene soulis hou foul deuelis deuouren hem. & þe holy gost dwelliþ not in siche proude & coueitouse clerkis, for þei ben templis of þe fend & þei worschipe fals goddis & dwellen in² ydolatrie, hou schulde god teche hem þe precius treuþes of his lawe? but certis bi þis ypocrisie þei wolen bryng in what heresie þat hem likiþ & meyntene it for good treuþe & profitable.

Matt. xv. 14.

But these prelates have not the Holy Spirit to teach them the truth.

¹ resceyueþ X.

² omitted X.

for þei seyn þat here sentence & dom is vnderstondynge of holy writt; & þes worldly prelatis wolen make a congregacion of hem self & clerkis assentyng to hem, summe for worldly drede & worldly fauour, summe for gold & hope of beneficis, & summe for drede of curs, priuynge of beneficis & slaundre & prisonynge & brennyng. but se now þe wodnesse of þis blasphemye. first ȝif holy writt be fals, certis god autor¹ þer-of is fals, & siþ þei graunten þe friste errour, þei moten graunte al þat sueþ þer-of. also þei feynen þat a fool & a cursed deuyll is wisere & trewere þan ihū crist god & man, siþ here speche is wittiere & trewere þan þe speche of god in holi writt, & þis reson is pleyne. suppose þat þis clerk writynge or techynge contrarie speche to holy writt schal be dampnyd, for þan he is a deuyll as crist seiþ of iudas, & as þei feynen his writynge & techynge is wittiere & trewere þan techynge & writynge of god almyȝtty; þan it sueþ opynly þat a fool & a cursed deuyll is wittiere & trewere þan ihū crist, kyng of wisdom & treuþe. Lord, siþ þe holy gost is autour & welle of witt & treuþe, wheþer he tauȝtte not goddis prophetis & cristis apostlis to write & speke treuþe; wheþer þe fend sathanas techiþ proude & coueitouse clerkis, ful of symonye & oþere synnys, more witt & treuþe þan þe holy gost techere of alle treuþe tauȝte cristis apostlis & euaungelistis, þat weren sad in bileue & charite & holy & trewe in lif & techynge. & whanne al þe ground is souȝt of þis heresie it stondiþ in þis poynt, þat holy writt, goddis owene word, is fals for þis cursed heretik mysvnderstondiþ it, or for it displeseþ þis heretik & reproueþ þis synne. but certis bi þis skille heþene men & fendis maken god most false of alle þingis, for þei vnderstonden þat god is most fals & wrongful & dampneþ hem most for here synnys. but it fariþ bi holy writt & cursed clerkis & foolis as it fariþ bi drounken men & þe mone *And candel; þei demen of o mone or candel to be two, for þei ben vndisposid to deme & knowe þe treuþe bicause of here

How they get adherents.

If holy writ is false, God, its author, is false.

These heretics see amiss like drunken men.
*[p. 216 MS.]

¹ autorite AA.

dronkenesse, so þes foolis, bi here pride, coueitise & oþere synnys, ben vnable to conseyue¹ þe heiȝe trewhis of goddis word; & þerfore þei seyn þat it is fals, for þei han not wittne grace to traueile aboute trewe vnderstandynge þer-of for worldly occupacion & ydelnesse.

Capitulum 3^m.

Worldly priests
maintain lying.

New religious
brought in to
imitate Christ,

are turned to
hypocrisy,

and become a
mere lie.
Psalm v. 6.

John viii. 39.

Now see whi meynthyng of lesyngis is brouȝt in. god seiþ þat no þing plesþ to a fool but folie; so no þing plesþ comynly to a false man but falsnesse; & for þes worldly prelatis & newe pharisees ben groundid in lesyngis, þerfore þei comenden lesyngis & meynthenen hem. for prelatis comen in þe staat of cristis apostlis to lyue in pouert, mekenesse & traueyle of þe gospel as þei deden, but þei ben turned to coueitise, worldly lordischipis, pride, ydelnesse & vanyte, & turnen cristis lif and² techynge vpsodom. Also newe religious ben brouȝt in-to þe chirche to reise up cristis mekenesse, pouert & penaunce, & to ben a bok of þis pouert & dispisyng of þe world to alle men to loken on, & þei ben turned to ypocrisie, pride, coueitise, glotonye & slouþe & bisynes³ of þe world more þan oþere worldly men, & ben fals bokis ful of synne & heresie; þat, as ierome & anseml⁴ witnessen, here croune, here tonsure, here abitis ben ful of lesyngis & þei ben but feyned & peyntid men of religion, & not only lesyngmongeris but pure lesyngis. & siþ god seiþ in þe sauter þat alle þat speken lesyngis schullen ben lost, hou moche more schullen þei ben lost þat ben pure lesyngis. þe secunde tyme, crist seiþ to þe iewis, ȝif ȝe weren abrahamus children ȝe schulden do werkis of abraham; & þerfore seiþ austyn wiþ oþere seyntis þat þou art his soone whoos werkis þou dost. þan siþ þe fend is fadir of lesyngis, as crist seiþ, þes worldly clerkis, & namely feyned religious, comenden lesyngis, for to witnesse in word & dede þat þei ben

¹ conceyue AA.

³ lesyngis AA.

² "in" in both MS.

⁴ sic in both MS.

þe fendis children. for ȝif þei weren cristis children þei schulden holde treuþe in word & wille & dede & meynntenen þat, and dispisen alle manere of lesyngis & falsnesse & synne vp here kunnyng & power; & as ion þe euaungelist seiþ, þei schulden wilfully putte hem to deþ for to distroie lesyngis, siþ lesyngis stondiþ more in false dedis þan in wordis, as¹ holy writt, ambrose & oþere seyntis witnessen pleynly. ¶ Þe þridde tyme, þes newe ordris & flaterynge myȝtte not be susteyned wiþ-oute lesyngis, boþe in word & dede, in þis manere as þei now ben; & for to schewe *þat þis veyn religious louen more here owene inuencions & here owene lustis² þan þe³ clene religion of cristis ordynaunce & gret pouert & peynful lif after crist & his apostlis, þei preisen lesyngis for to beren vp þes veyn nouelries & haunte here lustis. for ȝif cristis owene ordre & ensauple of his lif & his apostlis ben betere & profiteere þan ony newe maad of synful men, it is a foul lesynge to chese wityngly & meyntene þe lesse perfit,⁴ & forsake þe liȝttre, sikerere & perfitere. ¶ Also it is a cursed lesyng to drawe children, þat han but litil discrecion, to þes newe feyned religious bi ȝeftis & bi behestis⁵ of worldly lordischepe, honour & sikernesse of bodily welfare, more þan to holde wilful pouert & penaunce & dispit & forsakyng of alle worldly þing, for al þis is symonye & heresie ȝif it be wel souȝt; but it is a cursedere lesyng to stele ȝonge children fro here frendis & bi false disceitis make hem to be professed, sumtyme aȝenst here wille, & suffre hem not to gon out of þis veyn ordre, þouȝ þei knowen hem self vnable þer-to. ¶ For sumtyme þes children frendis fallen in mornynge to deþ; & sumtyme bi myschef ben dede where here children þus stolen schulden ellis helpe hem; & sumtyme þes children schulden be goode techeris & reuleris of þe peple, & now ben cursed ypocritis, ful of coueitise, lecherie, enuye & grucchyng aȝenst god; & now þei ben nedid to rob þe pore peple bi fals beggyng, & selaundren crist wiþ þis clamose beggyng

These new orders could not be sustained without lies.

*[p. 217 MS.]

Children inveigled into the orders,

so that their parents are left without support.

¹ of X.

² both MSS. repeat "more" here.

³ omitted X.

⁴ profit X.

⁵ hestis AA.

dampned of goddis lawe, & ȝit þes open þefte is stifly meyn-
 tened aȝenst goddis lawe, reson & charite bi sotil ypocrisie, &
 no chastiȝyng don þer-onne. for men wenen þat þes stronge
 þeues ben vnder no kyngis lawe ne prelatiſ lawe in oure lond.
 for men vnderstonden þat fewe men of discrecion comen to
 þes nouelries but siche ȝonge bi stelynge or disceyuyng, or
 ellis bi coueitise of worldly honour & sikernesſe of wombe
 ioie. & herefore þes veyn religious preisen lesyngis, dampnyd
 bi holy writt old & newe, for cristis treuþe. & þe deuel is
 lesyngis fadir & disceyued mankynde bi lesyng & brouȝt it
 in-to sorowe & peyne, as þe gospel &¹ þe first part of holy
 writt schewiþ; & þerfore seiþ ambrose þat alle men þat louen
 lesynges ben þe deueliſ children. ion þe euangelist seiþ þat²
 no lesyng is of god; þanne it is of þe deuyll siþ he is fadir of
 lesyngis. þerfore þe wise man seiþ þat þe mouþ þat leiþ sleep
 þe soule; & a þef is more worþi to be suffrid þan þe lastyng
 of a lesyngmongere; & dauid seiþ þat god³ schal dampne alle
 men þat speken lesyngis, & þe prophete zacharie seiþ þat
 goddis curs comeþ *to þe hous of lieris, & seynt austyn declareþ
 in many bokis þat of⁴ eiȝte manere lesyngis þe leste is synne,
 & who euere techiþ þe contrarie disceyueþ þe peple. but for
 þes veyn religious forsaken⁵ þe techyng & lif of crist, mene
 persone in trinyte, þerfore þei kunnen no mene bitwixe
 seiynge soþe in eche tyme & bitwixe lesyng. sumtyme it
 harmeþ men to seiþ þe⁶ soþe out of couenable tyme & euere
 it harmeþ to lie, but sumtyme it profitiþ to be stille & abide
 a couenable tyme to speke, as dide crist & his apostlis, & ȝif
 þes veyn religious knowen þis þei schulde haue no colour to
 make lesyngis. but þer is o gret cause whi þei comenden so
 lesyngis. þei maken profession to lyue bi labour of here
 hondis, bi benetis reulis & fraunseis & austynes, & to be deed
 to þe world, & to be ensauple & bok of wilful pouert,
 mekenesse & grete penaunce &⁷ abstynence; & now þei ben
 turned to alle manere of schrewdnesse, harlotrie & synne; &

Ambrose.

1 John ii. 21 (?).

Wisdom i. 11.

Ecclus. xx. 27.

Zech. v. 4.

*[p. 218 MS.]
Austin.Lies are always
bad, but truth
should be spoken
in season.¹ of X.² omitted X.³ omitted X.⁴ omitted X.⁵ forsakyng X.⁶ omitted AA.⁷ omitted X.

þerfore þei forsaken cristis scole of¹ treuþe & magnyfien þe deuelis scole of lesyngis; as þei first token lesyng of lif, so þei meyntenen now lesyng in word to coloure þer-bi here olde cursed lif, þat no man may bryngen hem out þer-of.

Capitulum 4^m.

See nowe þe þridde heresie þat may hoold of olde synnys.² Þes worldly prelatis & peyntid religious, beried in here olde synne,³ symonye, coueitise & pride & robberie, seyn þat it is aȝenst charite to crie opynly here cursed disceitis to lordis & comyn peple, & namely in here absence. but see þe waiwardnesse & cursednesse of þes deuelis ypocrisie & sheld of synne. These prelates say it is a sin against charity to denounce them.

Almyȝtty god, ful of charite, comaundiþ to þe prophete ysaie Isaiah lviii. 1. to crie & cesse not, & to schewe to his peple here grete synnes. synne of comyns is grete, synne of lordis & myȝtty men & wise is more, but synne of prelatis is most, & most blyndeþ þe peple. þan treue men ben holden bi goddis heste to crie most aȝenst þe synne of prelatis, siþ it is most & harmeþ most þe peple. Also crist seiþ who⁴ to hym þat Luke xvii. 1. slaundriþ a litel child of hem þat ben cristene. but prelatis of þe world & peyntid foolis of religion, bi here opyn pride, coueitise, glotonye, lecherie, extorsions & meyntenynge of synne, slaundren most þe peple; for her-bi þei ben bolde to walwe in synne preue & apert; þanne aȝenst þis synne schulden trewe men crie most. ¶ Also god seiþ bi þe prophete ezechiel þat ȝif a synful man lie in synne & þe prophete Ezekiel iii. 18. schewe hym not þe peril of his synne ne vengauce of god, þerfore þe synful man schal die in his synne & þe prophete schal answer for hym, & so boþe schullen be dampnyd. & siþ eche prest is an angel & prophete bi his presthod, *as *[p. 219 MS.] seynt gregory seiþ, eche prest is in dette to telle synful men Gregory. here synnes þat þei may amende hem. ¶ Also god seiþ bi þe

¹ & AA.

² AA reads þat maþ hoord of olde synnes. I suspect both readings are corrupt.

³ omitted AA.

⁴ wo AA.

- Ezekiel iii. 17. prophete ezechiel þat god haþ ʒouen a prest to be a spie to aspie þe sotil disceitis of þe fend & warne þe peple of hem; but among alle þe helpis of þe fend a wickid prelat or a fals religious is þe moste. þanne a trewe prest owiþ most to warne þe peple of hem. & þerfore gregory seiþ¹ & lawe of þe chirche þat no man harmeþ more cristene peple þanne he þat haþ name of ordre or holynesse & þer-wiþ lyueþ wickidly; for his synne is taken to ensauple of oþere. & þerfore seiþ gregory in² his pastoralis þat prelatis ben worþi to haue as many deþes as þei senden ensauples of synne to here sugetis & to men þat comen after hem. and ysidre & þe lawe seiþ þat he þat consentiþ & faouereþ a man in synne schal be reproued bi most greuous reprove. & austyn seiþ in þe lawe, þat a bischop þat consentiþ to oþer mennus synnes schulde rapere be clepid an vnchastised hound þan a bischop. & in token of þis crist purged þe temple & noon oþere place bi vengauce bodily take in his owene persone. & gregory & oþere seyntis seyn þat euele prestis ben cause of synne of þe peple. þerfore men schulden most ponysche þis most synne of prelatis & religious þat is cause of oþere & of distruction of rewmes.
- Matt. xxiv. 24. Also crist seiþ in þe gospel þat false prophetis & false cristis schullen ryse & disceyue manye, & biddiþ vs bewar of hem & flee hem & knowe hem bi here werkis, & telliþ what condicions & werkis þat þei schullen haue. þanne ʒif prestis knowen þes false anticristis & false prophetis bi tokenes of goddis lawe & warne not þe peple of hem, þei ben giltif of loos of cristene soulis. Also ion þe euaungelist seiþ: ʒif ony man see his broþer haue nede & schitte his purs & mercy fro hym, charite dwelliþ not in hym; moche more ʒif prestis knowen þat mennus soulis ben in myschief of fals bileue brouzt in bi anticristis clerkis, þei ben out of charite but ʒif þei helpen hem out of þis myschief, siþ þis³ is most myschief in þis world. & þerfore crist seiþ⁴ in þe gospel ʒif it be mercy to helpe a beste falle in þe lake, moche more mercy is
- Opinions of the fathers.
- Gregory.
- Isidore.
- Austin.
- Gregory.
- Matt. vii. 16.
- 1 John iii. 17.
- Luke xiv. 5.

¹ omitted X.² & X.³ omitted X.⁴ omitted AA.

it to drawe mennus soulis out of errour & peril of soule ; þat is disceit in bileue brouȝt in bi coueitouse clerkis & luciferis children. but anticristis prelatis & veyn religious seyn þat it is aȝenst charite to nemne hem bi name in open sermon & in here absence. trewe men seyn here þat ihū crist reproued scribis & pharisees bi name & in here absence, as þe gospel witnessiþ in many placis, & eiȝte tymes bi name cursed hem & cleped hem ypocritis, & telde¹ to þe comune peple here *false coueitise, ypocrisie & pride. & ihū clepid herode a fox in his absence & in his presence spak no word to him, as diuerse gospellis seyn. & ȝit anticristis clerkis tellen false lesyngis in open sermons vpon certeyn personys & in here absence, so þei don openly aȝenst here owene techynge ; but anticrist wolde haue þis ende, þat in absence of his cursed worldly prelatis & heretikis men schulden not reproue here cursed synnes for drede of lesyngis of charite & for bacbitynge. & anticrist makeþ hem so myȝtty þat in here presence no man dar speke aȝenst here opyn synnes but ȝif he wole be dede anoon. And so anticrist wolde þat no man schulde speke aȝenst here synne in no manere, but suffre hem² to robbe þe peple & brynge in heresies & distroie cristen-dom. But o principal cause is whi þei sey þus ; ȝif it be charite to crie þus aȝenst synnys of worldly prelatis & veyn religious, siþ many of hem ben kunnyng & reulen lordis & prelatis & myȝtty men in confession, þei mosten warne hem þat clerkis schulden lyue in pouert & mekenesse, & not in worldly lordischipis ne in pompe & vanyte as þei now don ; & warne lordis þat þei amende wickid clerkis of here opyn symonye & robbynge of here tenauntis ; & warne lordis & comyns hou god curseþ to blissyngis & preieris of men of cursed lif, & þat here preiere turne in-to synne, as god hym self & gregory & þe lawe witnessen, & hou prestis & religious þat ben out of charite & lyuen aȝenst goddis comaundementis, as in glotonye, dronkenesse & enemyte & pride, stiren god bi here veyn

Wicked prelates say it is wrong to preach against them by name.

Example of Christ.
Matt. xxiii.
Luke xi. 44.

*[p. 220 MS.]
Luke xiii. 32.
Luke xxiii. 8, 9.

Antichrist's priests slander certain persons openly in sermons.

Antichrist would fain shut his reprovers' mouths.

They fear lest men's eyes should be opened to their sins.

¹ telle X.

² omitted X.

Austin.

preiynge to vengauce *raþere* þan mercy. & as austyn seiþ,
 whateuere heryyngis of god here tounge blabere here lif
 blasphemeth god; & as god seiþ him self here preynge is
 cursed & abhomynable. & *certis* þanne schulde lordis knowe
 ypocrisie, heresie & disceit of worldly *prelatis* & feyned
 religious; & þanne schulden cristene men wite þat who euere
 lyueþ best preieþ best; & a symple *pater noster* of a plouȝman
 þat his *in* charite is betre þan a þousand massis of coueitouse
prelatis & veyn religious ful¹ of coueitise & pride & fals
 flaterynge & norischynge of synne. And for þes *anticristis*
 clerkis louen more here owene heynesse & pride & worldly
 ioie & welfare þan cristis honour & vertuous lif of cristene
 peple, þer-fore þei ratellen þat it is aȝenst charite to tellen
 opynly here cursed disceitis & synnes; last lordis & comyns
 taken fro hem here wast worldly goodis, & constreynen hem
 to kepe mekenesse & pouert & pennaunce, as god techiþ &
 here owene profession. þus almyȝtty *god *in trinyte* distroieþ
 þes þre nestis of *anticrist* & his clerkis, & stireþ alle manere
 of men to meyntene þe treuþe of holy writt & distroie lesyngis
 & openly preche aȝenst ypocrisie, heresie & coueitise, boþe in
 word & dede, of alle euyl *prelatis* & *prestis* & peyntid reli-
 gious; for þan schal goode lif & treuþe & pees & charite
 regne among cristene men. Ihesu crist for þin endeles mercy
 graunte vs þis ende. Amen.

Who liveth best
 prayeth best.

Antichrist's
 clerks fear to lose
 their riches.

* [p. 221 MS.]

¹ omitted AA.

XIX.

OF POOR PREACHING PRIESTS.

I GIVE this title for want of a better, but the tract has no heading in the MS. It is a summary of the wishes of the writer as to reform in Church and State; the first thirteen points of the poor priests relating to the clergy, and the eighteen which follow (and which might almost be taken as a separate tract), having reference to the duties of secular rulers.

I am inclined to date it 1377. The first year of a new reign would be a suitable time for the issue of a programme such as this; and there is a stronger ground for the supposition in the correspondence of several 'points' with petitions of the Commons in Richard's first Parliament. The tract certainly belongs to the fourteenth century. The desire that no priest or religious should be prisoned without open doom (p. 279) marks a time when no Act of Parliament had sanctioned the burning of heretics, but when the bishops, alarmed at the spread of heresy, were taking the law into their own hands.

I can give no decided opinion as authorship, but all the points are within the scope of Wyclif's teaching.

The tract is to be found only in the Corpus MS. X.

Of poor preaching Priests.

*[p. 234 MS.]
Three general
points of poor
preaching
priests.

*þe first general poynt of pore prestis þat prechen in engelond is þis; þat þe lawe of god be wel knowen, tauȝt, meyntened, magnyfied. ¶ þe secunde þat þe grete opyn synne þat regneþ in diuerse statis be distroied, & also heresie & ypocrisie of anticristis & his folweris. ¶ þe þridde þat verrey pees, prosperite & brennyng charite be encresed in cristendom, & namely in þe rewme of engelond, for to brynge [men] redily to þe blisse of heuene. ¶ þe first special poynt is þis, þat

Special points.
1. That Christians
and the clergy
should set holy
writ above all hu-
man authorities.
2. That all classes
live in their own
state of life as
Christ ordained.

cristene men, & namely clerkis of scole & curatis, studie, kepe, teche, & meyntene holy writt more þan newe statutis, customes & s[er]ymonyes maad of synful men. ¶ þe secunde, þat þe ordynaunce of ihū crist be stedfastly *kept in alle degres, so þat alle clerkis lyue clenly on spiritualte, as crist & his apostlis deden, & ȝeuyng ensaumples of mekenesse, pacience & heuenly lif & charite; & þat alle seculer lordschippis turne clene to seculer lordis, as god biddiþ in þe olde testament & newe, & þat þei don riȝtwisnesse, mercy & pite, & riȝtly gouerne þe comouns in reste, pees & charite, iuste customes, [&] resonable rentis to here lordis & maistris; & þat þe comyns

3. That the order
of priesthood be
set above all
new orders.

wilfully, mekely & trewely do here seruyce. ¶ þe þridde, þat þe ordre of presthod wiþ clenest reulis of cristis gospel be holden [&] meyntened boþe perfiter & esier & sikerer þan ony newe [ordre]¹ or secte wiþ bilawis, customes, obseruauncis founden of synful men, þat ofte erreden in þouȝt, worde & dede. ¶ þe firþe, þat cursed heresie of symonye in þe clergie be distroied boþe in benefices, ordris, sacramentis & pardons.

5. That the extor-
tions of prelates
be stopped.

¶ þe fifte, þat þe raueyne & extorcion of prelati & here officeris, þat þei don vnder colour of iuridiccon & almes in meyntenyng of synne for annuel rente, wisly & trewely be stoppid, & þat þei be wel chastised for robbyng of þe kyngis lege men. ¶ þe sixte, þat curatis ben not occupied in worldly

6. That curates
hold no secular
offices.

¹ Not in MS., but some such word is evidently wanted.

office in lordis courtis, leuyng cristene soules vngouerned & vntauzt, for boþe þe lord & þe clerk don gret traierie to god & his peple; & þat fals confessoures þat norischen men in synne for worldly worschipe, worldly wynnynge, welfare & ese, be hurled out of office & courtis for drede of schedynge of worldly venyme. ¶ Þe seueneþe, þat clerkis be

7. That the clergy be subject to the lay rulers.

meke & obeschaunt to worldly lordis, as crist & his apostlis weren, & be not norischid in grete synne by anticristis exempcion, leste cristene rewmes be distroied for suffraunce

& meynutenynge of cursed synnes. ¶ Þe eiȝteþe, þat cristene

8. That men care more for God's curse than for excommunication.

men drede more þe riȝtful cursynge of god for brekyng of his hestis þen wrongful cursynge of synful men, þat cursen

men for trewe prechyng of þe gospel & fulfillynge of þe werkis of mercy; for god blisseþ where þei cursen. ¶ Þe

9. That first fruits and wrongful fees be no more paid.

nynþe, þat pore men of þe rewme be not robbid for symonye of þe firste fruytis bi þe bischop of rome, ne bi þe bischepis at

hom for halowynge of chirchis & auteris, & prouyng of testaments & aquitauncis. ¶ Þe tenþe, þat cristene men ȝeue more

10. That Christ's gospel be held above bulls.

credence to cristis gospel & his lif þan to ony bullis of synful bischopis of þis world, or ellis þei forsaken crist and taken

anticrist & sathanas for here chief gouernour. ¶ Þe elleuenþe, þat þe sotil vsure of riche clerkis & marchaundes be hurled

11. That usury be stopped.

out of lond, & borwyng & lynyng be frely don to pore men for goddis sake. ¶ Þe twelfþe, þat no lege man of oure kyng

*be prisoned for wrongful cursynge of prelat, þe while he is redy to be iustified bi holy writt & trewely don his office.

12. That men be not imprisoned * [p. 236 MS.] merely for being excommunicate.

¶ Þe þrittenþe, þat who euere doþ most symonye & meynteneþ most synne be demed, knowen & tretid most heretik, most

13. That simony be held as heresy.

aduersarie of ihū crist & principal anticrist. ¶ ȝif ony man kan proue bi holy writt or reson þat þes poyntis ben false,

pore prestis wolen mekely ben amendid, & hertely preien alle goode men to helpe hem in here trewe cause for worschipe of

god, helpe of here soulis, & saluacion of cristene rewmes.

¶ Þes ben eiȝtene poyntis to distroie grete wrongis & synnes & strengþe þe pees & charite in oure lond, ȝif þe kyng, lordis

Eighteen points by which the land would be strengthened.

& comyns wolen practise hem wel.

1. Swearing to be repressed.

þat þe grete blasphemye of goddis name in veyn & fals swerynge & vnlefully creaturis, as bi cristis woundes, nayles & oþere membris, be refreyned bi drede of peynes sett bi þe kyng, lordis & comounte of cristene peple, lest god take grete vengauunce on oure peple, boþe in þis

2. False witnesses, and those who suborn them, to be punished.

wor[l]d & in þe toþer. ¶ þat falsse witnesse in assises & oþere causes, þat forsweren hem for coueitise, loue or drede or hate, & alle þat procuren hem þer-to, ben opynly ponyschid in ensauple of oþere; for ellis schal no man meyntene his heritage, goodis or lif for multitude of false

3. Maintaining of false causes to be repressed.

questis. ¶ þat meyntenours of false causes bi strengþe or lordischipe or bi sotel cauillacions feyned on þe lawe be wisly refreyned & scharply ponyschid in oure lond; for ellis no pore man schal ben hardy to chalenge his owene goodis, neiþer riche man but ȝif he wole make opyn debate or werre; or ellis treuþe, pees & charite schullen be exilid, & wrong & mansleyng, þefte & werre be hauntid, til oure lond be conquerid bi enemys or heþene men, as it haþ ofte ben bi-fore þis

4. Kidnapping of children by friars to be punished.

tyme. ¶ þat þe open þefte of mennus children þat feyned religious vsen vnder colour of holynesse be scharply ponyschid & forbeden, for bi þis many children ben deppere dampned þan þei schulden ellis; & þei may not worschipe here eldris as god biddiþ ne vsen þe fredom of cristis gospel; for whanne þei beþ stolen away fro here eldris, ȝe wiþ-inne age of discrecion, þei schul not forsake þe habit of freris for drede of prisonynge & deþ, þouȝ it be agens here wille & conscience; & þouȝ here frendis seke neuere so faste þei schullen not fynde hem, so þei

5. Friars not to be allowed to beg.

schul be led fro place to place. ¶ þat pore tenauntis of oure lond be not robbid bi þe gredy & nedles beggeris of sotel ypocritis hauynge þe name of religiouse men, & þat ihū crist be not sclaudred her by affermyngge *þat he beggede nedely fro hous to hous, as feyned religiouse vsen now; siþ holy writt forbediþ sicke beggyng, þouȝ summe beggen myȝte be

6. Disguised amortisement of land to be inquired into.

suffrid in tyme of grete nede. ¶ þat þe sotil amortasyng of seculer lordischipis þat is don bi menene hondis in fraude of

*[p. 237 MS.]

þe kyngis statute be visely¹ enquiryed, & þe goodis turned in helpe of þe rewme in sparynge of þe pore comons of taxes.

¶ þat þe almes of lordis ȝouen to *prelatis* & religious, vp *certeyn* condicions to fede *certeyn* pore men & oþer hospitalite & *certeyn* noumber of good *prestis*, be wisly amendid bi þe kyng

7. Misuse of charitable foundations to be amended.

& lordis whanne þes goodis beþ turned in-to pompe, glotonye & lecherie & meyntenynge false purchases; for þe kyng & lordis ben patrons & meyntenours of many synnes to destruction of þe lond. ¶ þat þe pore comons be not chargid wiþ

8. The superfluous wealth of the clergy should be employed in relief of taxation.

taxis, þe while clerkis, & namely religiouse, han superfluyte of riches of gold & siluer & riche vesselis & oþere iewelis; siþ alle þes goodis ben pore *mennus* goodis, & clerkis ben not lordis of hem but proctours, to spende hem trewely in pore *mennus* nedis, as goddis lawe & mannys witnessen. ¶ þat þe

9. The treasure of shrines and images to be spent for public purposes.

wast tresour hanged on stockis & stones be wisly spendid in defence of þe rewme, & releuyng of þe pore comouns; þat þe peple of oure lond be not brouȝt to maumetrie, ne þeste, ne lecherie meyntened vnder sicke pilgrimage, ne almes drawn fro pore nedy men bouȝt wiþ *cristis* precious blood. ¶ þat þe

10. The clergy to be kept to their work.

clergie of oure londe be refreyned fro pride, glorious array & worldly occupacion, & namely oure *prelatis* & *curatis*; arn² chargid bi þe kyng & lordis to teche wel here sugetis bi ensaumples of good lif & opyn & trewe *prechyng* of þe gospel, as bisily & redily as þei asken here tiþes. ¶ þat non of þe

11. The clergy to be suffered to keep and teach the law of Christ.

clergie be lettid to kepe trewely & frely þe gospel of ihū *crist* in good lyuyng & trewe techyng, for no feyned priuelegie or tradicions founden vp of synful wrecchis. ¶ þat no *prest* or

12. No priest to be imprisoned without open judgment.

religious in oure lond be prisoned wiþ-oten opyn dom & trewe cause, fully knowen to oure kyng or his trewe conseil; for ellis worldly *prestis* & feyned religious may stoppe trewe men from *prechyng* of holy writt & magnifyng of þe kyngis regalie, & murþere þe kyngis lege men wiþ-uten answeere.

¶ þat þe obedience of children to fader & to modir & of *seruauntis* & *tenauntis* to here lordis & maistris, þe whiche

13. Obedience of children and servants to be preached.

¹ ? bisily; or, perhaps, for avisely = carefully.

² ? and

- obedience *crist* vsed & tauȝtte & comaundid it¹ be magnyfyed & prechid more þan ony newe feyned obedience founden of synful men, þe whiche obedience neiþer *crist* ne his *apostlis deden ne tauȝten ne comaunden ne conseileden opynly þer-to.
- *[p. 238 MS.]
14. Markets and fairs not to be held on Sunday nor in church. ¶ þat chepynge, & namely feiris, be not vsed on þe halidaies, & algatis on þe sunday & in holy chirche, for þat is expresly aȝenst goddis comaundement & comone lawe of holy chirche.
15. Adultery not to be compounded for. ¶ þat open lecherie & avoutrie be not suffrid in grete placis in oure rewme, ne meyntened for annual rente, for þat is vterly aȝenst goddis biddynge. ¶ þat þeste & raueynen & mansleyng & robberie be not meyntened in seyntiwarye vnder colour of priuylegie; siþ kyng & cristene men ben sworn to meynten eche man in his riȝt & distroie wrong & falsenesse. ¶ þat worldly clerkis & feyned religious vsurpen not þe kyngis regalie, ne stelle fro hym his holy power graunted of god for no crynge or ypocrisie; siþ þei ben sworn to be trewe to þe kyng & furbere his worschipe & profit of his lond. ¶ þat þe kyng & lordis gouerne hem self in here astaat as god ordeyned it, in gret wisdom, myȝt of men & sufficient riches to aȝenstonde wrong & mysdoeris, & helpe pore men, fadirles & modirles & widewes & aliens in here lordischipe & worschipe, & rewarde trewe men, to reule clerkis in mekenesse, wilful pouert & bisynesse of gostly traueile for helpe of mannys soule, as *crist* & his apostlis diden, and suffre hem not to haunten anticristis ypocrisie & tirauntrie of þe comones bi feyned censures, iurisdiction & power of prisonynge. & þat þei reule here seruauentis & tenauntis in riȝt mercy, pees & charite, & suffre no man hardy to breke goddis hestis in here² presence, ne ony man don wrong or dispit to oþere, but in alle in worschipe of eche oþere in vnyte, pees & charite.
16. Sanctuary not to be abused.
17. The clergy not to usurp the king's rights.
18. The king and his lords to follow God's law.

¹ MS. inserts to. Perhaps the sentence should be corrected by repeating "be magnyfyed & prechid."

² herte MS.

XX.

[This fly-sheet is merely a piece of translation, and is only printed for the sake of completeness. Copied from the Corpus MS. X.]

Augustinus. Arguam te nescis.

þe holy doctour seynt austyn spekyng in þe persone of crist vnto synful men seiþ in þis wise: I schal reprove þe, & in what manere & whanne þou wenest not I schal reprove þe. I holde me stille whanne þou dost amys; but I wole not holde me stille wiþ my iugement, I schal reprove þe. what schal I don vnto þe whanne þat I reprove þe? I schal sette þin self bifore þin owene face. ¶ Now soþly whanne þou dost amys þou wenest þat þou art good, for þou wilte not seen þi self. þou reproveest oþer folk, þou ne lookest not on þi self; þou acusest oþer folk, but þou ne þenkest not on þi self; þou puttest oþer folk biforn þin eien, þou puttest þi self bihinde þi bake. but whanne I reprove þe I do þe contrarie. I take þe fro þi bak, & putte þe bi-for þin owene eien. þou schalt loke vpon þi self & þou schalt bewayle þi self, & þan schal þere *ben no manere hou þou schalt amende þi self. þou *[p. 239 MS.] dispisest now þe tyme of mercy, þe tyme of iugement comeþ; for þou hast songen to me in holy chirche þes wordes: *Misericordiam et iudicium cantabo tibi domine etc.* ¶ Lord I schal synge to þe þi mercy, & þi iugement out of oure mouþ comeþ, & cristis chirchis proclaymen euere where cristis mercy & eke his iugement &c. Now is þe tyme of mercy to amende vs. 3it is not come þe tyme of iugement. we han space, we han place, we don synne, eke amende we oure giltis.

XXI.

OF DOMINION.

DR. SHIRLEY retains Bale's title of this tract, "De Dominio Divino," while saying "it is certainly erroneous." I have preferred to keep near to the old name, which after all is not very wrong. It is true that the chief subject of the tract is the wrongfulness of Church endowments, and of the clergy's exemption from secular jurisdiction, but the ground of the argument is that dominion (whether possession or jurisdiction) is set by God in the hand of lay rulers, who may not alienate it without his leave. We see here how the doctrine of dominion bore on that of the unlawfulness of endowments.

I fancy that I see here signs of translation from the Latin. However this may be, I do not doubt that the tract is substantially Wyclif's. I can find no evidence as to date.

Copied from the Dublin MS. AA., where only it is found.

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	It was ordained in the old law that priests should live of tithes and offerings. It is said that this law has passed away, and that lords would not be free if they might not give away their property in endowment	..... p. 284
	God is chief lord of all property, which therefore cannot be alienated without his leave, and he has forbidden in both testaments the endowment of the clergy	..... 284
	This prohibition is moral, and has not been repealed, having as much sanction as the command to give tithes to the priesthood, which the clergy enforce	..... 285
	Evils which follow the reversal of God's law. Lay lords are bound to amend these evils, and their confessors should urge them to do so	..... 286
II.	The commands of Scripture clear. Examples set by Christ and his Apostles	..... 286
	The advocates of endowments appeal to charters, which can have no weight against God's law	..... 287
	The Pope's cursing not to be regarded. This thunder curseth the well that it comes from	..... 288

Miracles and the example of saints are insufficient sanctions.

Miracles may be the devil's work, and all are not saints that are called so p. 288

God's law is the only safe guide, and this forbids possession to the clergy, who should be near to Christ in poverty 289

CHAP. III. Antichrist's clerks say that the clergy should be judged only by ecclesiastical judges; but every man must judge his neighbour, and the only judgment that God forbids is foolish judgment 289

Judgment may be foolish, as ignorant, hasty, or founded on wrong principles 290

God has given men their senses and their conscience to judge with, and if they do not use these they are no better than beasts; but the devil would like to make them judge blindfold, as the Jews did with Christ 291

IV. The devil says that God forbids men to judge their brethren 291

Christ bade the Jews judge him, which he would not have done if laymen might not judge clerks 291

Prelates should be thankful to those that reprove them 292

Duty of bearing God's chastisements 293

[Of Dominion.]

Capitulum primum.

*[p. 188 MS.]

In the old law
priests were to
live on tithes
and offerings.An adversary says
this law is done
away.God is chief lord
of everything in
the world.Owners may not
alienate their
possessions with-
out his leave,therefore endow-
ments made
without his leave
should not stand.God in both tes-
taments forbids
endowment of
the clergy.God a courteous
lord.

*[p. 188b MS.]

*Sif many falce gloseris maken goddis lawe derk & letten seculere men to susteyne it & kepen it; of siȝhe falce gloseris schulde ech man be war. it is seid ofte tyme, in þe oolde lawe, þat prestis & clerkis schulde lyue on goddis part; þat is to seie, on dymes & offeryngis, & haue noon oþer heritage among here briþeren. but aduersarie of goddis lawe seiþ here bi his glose, þat þis schulde be kept in þe oolde testament, & is no nede to be kept in þe tyme of grace, for partys of þe oolde lawe ben now passid; & but ȝif lordis myȝte ȝeue here heritage to clerkis, as bischoppis & abbotis & oþer holy housis, þei were vnfree to helpe here soulis & here fadris, & so þei weren noȝt ful lordis of here owne goodis. But here we schal suppose as Cristen mennes bileue, þat god is cheef lord of eche þing of þis world. And so, al ȝif kyngis & oþere han free lordschipe, neþeles god is more free lord of þat same þing, ne it is nouȝt leeful to seculere lordis, to alyenen his lordschipe wiþouten leue of god; as in mannes lordschipe a litil lord haþ no leue to alienen his heritage but bi leue of þe cheif lord, & þis lawe haþ more resoun in þe lordschipe of god. Here may we se, siþ lordis of þis world hadde noȝt leue of god þus to dowe his clerkis, here fool ȝifte schulde noȝt stonde bi skile; siþ god may noȝt be contrarie to him silf. But god ofte tyme in his two testamentis forbediþ his clerkis to be þus dowid; & so þis gile, þat cam bi cautel of þe fend, schulde be now broken for defaute of ground. ne grucche noȝt herfore þat god is cheif lord, for it falliþ to his godhed to be lord of eche þing, & more curteys lord may no man haue, ne more profitable lawis to lede a man by resoun. for þis lord suffriþ þee nouȝt to leese good but bi resoun, *ne he axiþ þee no rente but for þin owne profite; & þus þe strengþe of goddis lawe axeþ aȝen þis lordschipe, & fillynge of goddis lawe þat sueþ grace

& pees. and se þis lewidnesse of þis resoun, þat þes lawis han no strengþe for þei ben of þe oolde lawe, þat myche is went away. certis so ben þe ten comaundementis of þe oolde lawe, þat ech man mote kepe ȝif he wole be saued; and so sermonyalis of þe oolde lawe & summe iudycialis bynden nouȝt now, but moralis bynden euere, siþ þei stonden in vertues. And so forsakyng of worldly richessis scholden bi more skile be kept now þanne in þe oolde lawe. And herfore crist & his apostlis kepten þis ful streytly, & þei telden beste how þe lawe schulde be kept. more-ouer men may se þat siþþe þes same lawis ben scharply holden in þing þat touchiþ wynnyng, as in dymes & offryngis, by þe same skile þei schulden be kept in lordschipe; or ellis we weren to myche chargid & mut leue seruese of crist, þat he haþ ordeyned vs to do. Also crist & his apostlis techen vs to lyue beter þanne þes patrouns of þes newe ordris; & þei lyueden pore liif, & fledde lordschipe as venym. lord, whi schulde not we do so aftir þese holy patrouns? and whanne þou seist þat goddis lawe makith þes lordis vnfree to helpe hem wiþ here owne goodis, boþe in body & soule, it is knowen þinge þat contrarie falliþ, bi þat lordis reuersen þe ordeynaunce of crist, & þus for lordis fooly fallen many harmes boþe to lordis, clerkis & comunes. lordis ben maked pore & eke fewe in noumbre, & ofte tymes þei ben nedid to spoyle here tenauntis, & bi grucching aȝeyn þei disturblyn þe pees; and þis nedid noȝt to falle ȝif lordis of þis world hadden al þis lordschipe of þis world in here hond & ordeyned wel þerfore. more riche clerkis passen lordis in hous*holde & meyne, in glorie of þis world, in power & richessis. And so it may falle þat þei taken fro lordis werris & powers a-proprid unto lordis, for one harme in goddis lawe bryngiþ in oþir. Also clerkis bi symonye envenemyn hem silf, & ȝif þei stode in pouert þei fel noȝt in þis perel. Also goodis of þis rewme ben yuel dispendid in hondis of þes clerkis & ȝeuen vnto false men, boþe vnto alienes & men of þis lond; & so goodis of þis rewme ben yuel distryed. Also þes clerkis ben herbi vnabled to preie &

Falsity of the plea that these laws are no longer in force.

The moral commandments of the old law are still binding.

The laws are sharply kept as to exacting tithes, they ought equally to be kept in refusing ownership.

Christ and his apostles the best teachers, and they lived in poverty.

Lords reverse the ordinance of Christ, and harm follows.

They are impoverished, and spoil their tenants.

*[p. 189 MS.]

The clergy take upon them the work of lords.

Goods of the realm given to aliens.

The clergy hindered from God's service.

Jod ix. 9.

Disquiet is brought upon the country.

Negligence of lords in correction is a kind of consent.

Confessors and others should maintain this law of God.

to serue god as he comaundeþ hem; and þis is þe moste harme aȝens god & man, for þis nedīþ rewmes to lyuen in werres. for job seiþ in his book, & resoun approueþ, þat no man reuersiþ god but ȝif he haue vnpees; and so þis dowyngē aȝens goddis lawe doiþ harme to lordis & clerkis & comunys, boþe bodily harme & harme to here soulis, & nēgligent of lordis in amendement here-of is a manere of consence & greggiþ here synne; & it harmeþ here elderis þat bigan þis errour, ne good doþ it noon; but moueþ lordis to pride þat here kyn haþ þus foundid housis of religioun. and siþ god in his lawe cursiþ men þat breken it, it semeþ þat boþe ben cursid, lordis & clerkis, and herfore confessouris & alle þat ben on goddis half schulde moue & maynteyne þis lawe of oure god. & siþþe þe moste vnfredom is vnfredom of synne, for þat makiþ a man seruaunt to nouȝt & seruaunt to þe fend, & dampneþ him in helle, coueytise of fredom schulde moue men her-to, and so synne bi his manere bryngiþ his doere into þe same myre þat he eschewiþ.

Capitulum 2^m.

Laws of New Testament so clear that it is needless to answer false interpreters,

*[p. 189^b MS.]

who break the law,
1 Cor. xvi. 22.

and are cursed of God.

Matthew x. 10.

The seuene lawis of þe newe testament ben so open, & þere-to confermed wiþ þe liif of crist & of his apostlis, þat it is no nede to reuerse þes gloses þat feynen to þes lawis a falce vnderstondinge, & techen clerkis to lyue on worldly manere. but þes religious * & seculere prestis, & so many clerkis, bi brekyngē of þis lawe, ben cursid of god & venemyn cristendome. for crist him silf techēþ bi word of seynt poul þat he is cursid of god þat loueþ noȝt crist; but siþ he onely loueþ crist þat kepiþ his wordis, who euere brekiþ cristis lawe is cursid of god, and he þat fauoriþ þis part or assentiþ here-wiþ; & his cursyngē is more þan cursyngē of þe pope, or ony opere sensuris þat he kan feyne; & so clerkis of þis lond semen¹ irregulere, for þei han so longe leyen in so gret cursinge. Also in þe tyme of grace crist for-bede his apostlis þat þei

¹ senen MS.

schulde nouȝt bere in þe weye þat wolde lette hem to preche; myche more clerkis schulde nouȝt take on hem such lordschipe, þat wolde lette more to preche & to serue god; siþ clerkis ben now more pore of ȝiftis of god & more bisi aboute þe world,

Christ forbade his apostles to take anything that could hinder them from preaching.

þanne to bere stauēs or kotis or hoosis or gretynge of folke þat crist forbeed his apostlis. Also we schulden haue mynde

Luke x. 4.

on þe passioun of crist, hou dere he bouȝte his lawe whanne he was deed herfore, for al þat he suffride & kyndenesse þat he dide was to comende his lawe to men þat comen aftir him.

O, how vnkynde ben þei þat dispisen þis lawe, or for to breken it or to putte oþere byfore it. certis þei ben cursid, as þe

Psalm cxix. 21. Despisers of Christ's law accursed, and unable to give sacraments. They are the worst heretics.

salme seiþ, and suche ben vnable to preie or to ȝeue ony sacramentis. and ȝif þat heresie were wel knowen, þes clerkis were heretikis more þanne ony oþere; for þei defenden here part aȝenes goddis lawe bi falce lawis & cautels to here lyues

ende. But ȝit antecristis clerkis prouen bi here resouns þat þe kyng & þe rewme mote nede maynteynen hem, siþþe þei

ben sworn to þe grete charite.¹ But here we schal supposen

Magna Carta.

as cristen mennes bileue, þat no mennes lawis ne chartiris maad of men han strengþe but in as myche as goddis lawe confermeþ hem; for what is ony chartre or ony lawe worþ,

Charters void if against God's law.

But ȝif god conferme it by his *lawe? & so þis grete chartre

*[p. 190 MS.]

wolde moue bi goddis wytt, þat kyngis & here rewmes schulde maynteyne þe chirche by þe ordeynaunce of god, & distroie þe contrarie. and ȝif we taken hede boþe kyngis & rewmes

Kings should maintain the Church after God's ordinance.

bi here opyn opis schulden take away þes rentis þat þe fend haþ dowid wiþ clerkis aȝens cristis ordeynaunce. ffor no wise man wolde seiþ þat lordis by here opis schulde maynteyne

lawe of þe fend aȝens ihesu crist; and so to chalenge of þe kyng to maynteyne alle here chartres & alle here newe lawis þat þei han founden were to chalenge þe kyng as þe fendis

seruaunt; and þere were ouere myche dispit to here lyge lord.

and ȝif þou seiþ þat cursyngis purchased of þe pope and

oþere felle sensuris þondured ouere til englond schulde fere ouere rewme to do sicke þingis; Here we schal suppose as

If England is threatened with cursing and censures,

¹ Sic in MS. for chartir.

oure bileue þat no mannes cursynge haþ ony strengþe but in
as myche as god himsilf cursiþ; and so ofte tyme cursiþ þe
fendis mynystres, & god him silf blissiþ and þe fend cursiþ;
& ȝif þou seie þat moo men stonden wiþ sicke cursynge þanne
wiþ blissyng of god, & hem schulde we trowe; here oure
bileue techiþ vs þat goddis lawe is trewe & mote stonde, al ȝif
þere be mo fendis þan trewe men, and triste to no man in þis
mater but to goddis lawe; for þat seiþ god himsilf, þat may
neuere be false.¹ O how hardy be we maad to werren on oure
briþeren, & how foule cowardis to stonde in goddis cause, &
certis all þis is maad bi þe fendis craft. drede we nouȝt þis
þondir, for it turneþ aȝen & cursiþ þe welle þat it come fro.
ffor men stable in bileue ben a þick walle to turnen aȝen þis
þondir þat it² persiþ noȝt. But ȝit þou seist þat oure rewme
stood in myche ioie whanne þe chirche was putt & mayntened
in þis staat, & so it were ful dredeful *to distrie þis staat.
But certis þis is a fendis skile to maken vs drede in feiþ;
but we schal vndirstonde, as goddis lawe techiþ us, þat ofte
tymes fendis children passen here in welþe þe children of god
þat aftir schal haue blisse. & so it is a feble skile: ȝif oure
rewme hadde suche welþe whanne þei dide & maynteyned
suche staat to þe chirche, þanne þei diden wel & plesaunly to
god. make goddis lawe þi iuge, for þat mote nedis be, & þis
iuge may noȝt folde ne faile in riȝtwisnesse; and as þe gospel
seiþ þis iuge is aduersarie to ech man in erþe þat holdiþ noȝt
goddis lawe. But þou seist þat myraclis & lyues of holy men
approuen þis dowyng of þe chirche, and god wiþ his seyntis;
who schulde be so hardy to breke sicke an ordeynaunce?
But here schulde we wyte þat many suche sygnes comen ofte
of þe fend for mennes firste synne; so, as seynt poul seiþ, þe
fend haþ power for to figuren him in-til an aungel of liȝt; & so
he is vntrewe man þat trowiþ to sicke signes as myche as he
trowiþ to þe feiþ of goddis lawe. & so it is no bileue þat alle
þes men ben seyntis þat ben hirid of þe pope to ben holden
sicke; and fewe men woot how þes wondris comen þat we

we answer that
God blesses when
the devil curses,

and we must
trust God, al-
though a ma-
jority be against
us.

Curses settle at
home.

*[p. 190b MS.]

Earthly prosper-
ity not a proof of
righteousness.

Testimony of
miracles and
saints for en-
dowment.

2 Cor. xi. 14.
The devil may
work wonders.

All are not saints
that are canon-
ized.

¹ falle MS.

² is MS.

clepyn myraclis, wheþer of good or yuel; ffor well we wyten þat þe fend doiþ ofte myche good. stonde we stable in oure bileue, for þat may neuere faile. But þe fend replyeþ aʒenst þis truþe, and seiþ, þe king's graunt bi his owne chartre & bullis of þe pope confermed þis dowyng, how schulde men denye þis or distroie it, But ʒif þei reuersen al þe ordynaunce of þis rewme? Here I woot þat men of lawe ben moued bi siche resouns. But professouris of goddis lawe schulde stonde by here bileue, and putte abac mannes lawe, but ʒif goddis lawe ap*proue it; & so ʒif chartris of men ben contrarie to goddis lawe, þes chartres schulde be wayschen and goddis lawe schulde stonde; and so ʒif þes possessioneris toke fre þis in here lond and allegede here chartris, and trewe men goddis lawe, þanne schulde men se whiche were goddis children & whiche þe fendis children by maynteyn[yn]ge of þes lawis. and so þe fend can nouȝt do but ʒif he ouere do, whanne he argueþ þus, þat ʒif a rewme were purgid of errouris in goddis lawe, þanne were þis rewme distryed. wele I woot þat goddis lawe ʒeueþ seculer lordschipis to seculer lordis & forbediþ hem to clerkis. þe laboureris of cristis chirche han leffully rentis & worldly possessionis oþere þan clerkis han, ffor þei ben hiȝere in degree and neer to crist in pouerte; & boþe þes þingis to-gidre may þei nouȝt haue.

God's law is the only safe guide.

The devil pleads bulls and charters, and says the laws of the realm will be overthrown.

*[p. 191 MS.]
No laws or charters should weigh against God's law.

God's law forbids possessions to clergy,

whose distinction should be that they are near Christ in poverty.

Capitulum 3^m.

But aʒens þis blaberen antecristis clerkis, and aleggen goddis lawe, but to false sentense, þat seculer men schulde noȝt iuge of clerkis, how euere þei don; for þei han propre iuges, as popis & bischopis & oþere iugis vndir hem; & her-to þei leggen but lewydly goddis lawe. Here schal we wite þat þere ben many iugementis, as iugement bi goddis lawe and iugement by mannes lawe, & in boþe þes lawis ben many manere iugementis; and schal we trowe þat ech man of discrecioun schal iuge of his neiȝbore, be he more or lesse, be he prest or clerk, lord or ellis pore man, and so to al þe speche þat is in goddis lawe aloonly fool iugement is þere-inne for-

Antichrist's clerks say that the clergy should be judged only by their proper judges.

Different kinds of judgment.

Foolish judgment the only one forbidden,

i.e. judging
ignorantly,

*[p. 191b MS.]

Rom. xiv. 4.

or hastily, on too
little evidence,

or on too great
reliance on au-
thority,

(thus men are de-
ceived by popes),

or in laying down
false principles.

Kings should
have the jus-
tice of bulls
examined.

*[p. 192 MS.]

fendid; & man may iuge folily upon many maneris; as ȝif a man iuge of þing þat he knowiþ noȝt, as many men *presumen* to iuge a man to heuene, or ellis iuge him to helle bi here feyned cursynge, & so *prelatis* *ofte tymes blasfemen in god, & taken on hem iugement & knowynge of god; and þis iugement dampned poul, for *prelatis* schulde noȝt iuge *seruauntis* of god in þat þei knowe nouȝt. þe secounde foly of iugement stondiþ in þis, þat men iugen to liȝtly & bi litil euydence to good or to yuel, þat sueþ noȝt *þer*-of; as ȝif a man iuge for fame of his broþer or for autorite of name, þat what euere he seye [is] soþe, and sekiþ noȝt þe resoun of þing þat he seiþ; & þus ben men disceyued in iugement of popis and of oþer *prelatis* & of oþere comyntes, & ofte tymes on þis wise ben men disceyued of iugement of myraclis, & many oþer signes, and þus *mennes* iugementis ben ofte ful of errouris whanne þei iugen by mannes entent bi ouere¹ liȝt euydence. men schal euere suppose þe good, but ȝif open euydence teche þe contrarie, of þingis þat men þenken on. the þridde manere of errour þat falliþ in mannes iugement is falceheed of here prynciple þat þei groundem hem on; as falce wytnesse þat gone on a quest gabben in here witnessis, þei maken þe iuge erre and pupplische a sentence contrarie to trewþe. & riȝt þus multitud of antecristis disciplis may moue men to leue cristis lore; but blessed be god, þat in euery chirche haþ ordeyned masse bookis to witnesse his gospel. And þus schulde kyngis bi worschipe of here staat, constreyne here lyge freris & here oþere clerkis, vp peyne of here leggeaunce, to telle trewþe of þes bullis & of þes oþere nouelries, wheþer þei ben of bileue, & grounde hem in resoun or in goddis lawe, & examyne here *proues* wheþer þei ben trewe men. and þus schulde þe rewme be reuled bi riȝt, and falce men destroyed þat venemen þe rewme; & þus schulde men iuge þat ben goddis *seruauntis*, al ȝif þei stirte noȝt vp in pilatis chaier. and so ech iugement þat is *noȝt groundid in god schulde be fled of men as disceyt of þe fend. ffor god him silf is treweþe, as þe

¹ evere MS.

gospel seiþ, and þe fend is fadir of lesyngis. and so sum good iugement is of mennes out-wittis, as þei iugen whiche mete is good & whiche mete is yuel, & sum men iugement is of mennes witt wiþinne, as men iugen how þei schal do, by lawe of consience; as cristen men schal iuge to whom þei don here almes, and þat þei feden nouȝt fendis children among here owne heed.¹ & it were al on to reue fro worldly men þis iugement, & to seiþ þat þei ben bestis dampnable for here folye. And þus þe fend may hide mennes wittis & bobbe hem in here resoun, as þe iewis diden wiþ crist, & leden hem to helle as blynd avocatis of þe fend. þis blynde boffetynge schulde worldly men eschewe, ffor it helpiþ nouȝt to þis world ne to þe toþer world. And wite wel þes lordis þat god haþ ȝeuen hem resoun for to seruen him, and loken here owne profiȝt; ffor þis lord of his curtesye axeþ no seruyse of man, but ȝif it turne to his profyt & nouȝt to þe profyte of god. and þus it were al on antecrist to teche þat men schulde nouȝt iuge of dedis of his clerkis, & to seiþ þat he is lorde aboue ihesu crist.

Some judgment
is by the senses,

some by con-
science.

Without such
judgment men
would be beasts.

Matt. xxvi. 68.

Capitulum 4^m.

Aȝeyns þis þe fend grucchiþ bi many blynde resouns, and seiþ þat god forbeediþ his men to iuge of here briþeren. But we schulde trowe to wordis þat god puttiþ in his lawe. ffor god biddiþ þat a man schulde assaye him silf, and so ete of þe breed þat is þe sacrid oost. ffor he þat etiþ unworþily etiþ his owne iugement, ffor he iugiþ nouȝt wisely þe worþinesse of goddis body. & þe holy salme seiþ: “vnderstond, ȝe kyngis; and schaak of ȝou rudenesse, ȝe þat jugen londis.” Sum tyme iugement god grauntid to kyngis, as daviþ & salamon & many oþere kyngis. & ȝif þou seiþ þat popis lawe spekiþ oþer wise of *jugement, haue þe popis lawe more suspette; siþ goddis lawe spekeþ þus, and þus crist biddiþ þe iewis to iuge of him riȝt iugement. Lord, wheþer þes clerkis ben more hiȝe ouere seculeris þan was our lord ihesu crist ouere þes falce iewis? ffor trewe men ben certeyn þat crist bad hem

The devil says
God forbids men
to judge their
brethren.

1 Cor. xi. 28.

God's law teaches
otherwise.

Psalms ii. 10.

The pope's law
not to be trusted.

*[p. 192b MS.]
John vii. 24.

Christ bade the
Jews to judge
him.

¹ ? herd.

noȝt juge of him but ȝif it were leeful to lewid men to iuge of clerkis; and so it were al on to denye siche iugement and denye regalye þat falliþ to þe kyng. Lord, wheþer þe lawe of ynglond schal be now distried bi fablis of heretikis contrarie to goddis lawe? Wel I woot þat men were wont bi iugement of ynglond to dampne prestis and clerkis for robberie & þefte, and also for trayterie and oþer smale trespas; and ȝif þei now denye þis þei denye þe regalye. And þus seie to antecrist þat crist bad men iuge of him boþe bi his godhede and eke by his manheed. Lord, wheþer antecristis clerkis ben more þanne was crist? Also seynt poul iugiþ of petris synne, and aȝen-stoode him for he was reprouable. Lord, wheþer prelatis now ben more confermed in grace þanne was seynt petir þanne aftir sonde of þe holy goost? Also ech man schulde bi þe lawe of þe gospel vndirnyme ech broþer þat synneþ aȝens him. But comunly þes prelatis synnen aȝens lewid men; þanne lewid men by here feiþ schulde vndirnyme þes prelatis. And so it is al on to oute-take þes prelatis fro suche snybbinge of þe peple & make hem more þan crist; ffor ȝif crist myȝte haue synned he wolde þus haue be blamed. Also by þe lawe of charite ech man schulde loue ech oþere; and siþ god haþ ȝeuen men witt to se þat prelatis don yuel, bi þe lawe of charite þei schulde moue hem to good. & so it were al on to take prelatis fro þis iugement and seie þat þei ben fendis þat may nouȝt be amendid. also bi goddis lawe a man schulde for charite drawe *his enemyes beste oute of þe lake; but god haþ more reward of men þanne of beestis, þanne myche more schulde a man helpe men oute of synne. also siþ ech of vs schuld knowe him silf synful and be glaad of seuene goostly werkis of mercy, he schulde haue ioie þat men reproued him of his synne; and certis so wele ech man but þe quyk deuel; ffor he for his pride wele not be blamyd of god. And herfore seith þe wise man þat he þat hatiþ blamyng is suture of þe fend, rebelle aȝens god. And salamon seiþ: "he þat dispisiþ his blamere schal be sodenly distried & noȝt helid of his synne." And herfore techen seynt poul to

The king's rights attacked.

Crimes of priests punishable by the law of England.

Gal. ii. [11.]

Matt. xviii. [15.]

Reproof is a duty of charity.

*[p. 193 MS.]

We should be glad to be re-proved.

Ecclus. [xxi. 7?]

Prov. xv. [10.]

Titus i. [13.]

reprove sicke ful harde. ffor þus dide crist oure alþere maystir reprouynge þes pharisees, and so he dide to peple Matt. xxiii. clepyng him sathanas, and so charite chacchiþ men to þis iust jugement. ffor goddis lawe techiþ vs to don to oþere Matt. vii. [12.] men as we schulden willen þat þei diden to vs. But who led bi resoun putt in greet perel wolde noȝt be glaad to haue helpe þere of? But siþe ech man by synne is in an huge perel, he schulde be glaad of eche þing þat warneþ him of his perelle, ȝif it be neuere so lowe & werse þan man in kynde. For ellis men¹ in obedient as þe firste apostata. Wel I rede in goddis lawe þat god was obedient unto voys of man as to his owne Josh x. [12.] instrument. And so siþe ech creature þat telliþ a man a truþe is instrument of god to schewe him þis truþe, it were oon to dispise þis instrument in þis and to dispise þe truþe of þe lord þat he schewiþ. But he were oute of resoun þat were smyten in feueris or ellis in a frenesye or ony oþer siknesse þat wolde noȝt take his medicine or reule of anoþer man, al ȝif it were displesynge to him for a tyme. Thus meke men & trewe men blamen noȝt þe creature þat telliþ hem a truþe in name of god, siþe þe lord moeueþ hem for profyt *of men to *[p. 193b MS.] tellen hem goddis wille, in him schulde þei heren. and so ȝif we can se clerkis schulde wiþ ioȝe suffre temporal lordschipis be taken away from hem. For wel we wyten þat þis were noȝt aȝens goddis lawe ne hyndrid hem noȝt to gete hiȝe setis in heuene; but rapere disposide hem to come to myche blisse and þus schulde ech man willen as god him silf biddiþ hem.

The clergy ought to part with their temporal lordships joyfully.

And so take heede what god biddiþ þee do & do þat and noon oþer, for al oþere is synne. & loke to alle þingis þat comen to þee to suffre and suffre it mekely, siþ god nediþ þee þerto & sendiþ it for þe beste, al ȝif þou kanst noȝt se it; as a child is ofte betyn for his owne profyte and ȝit he grucchiþ þer-aȝens, for he seeþ noȝt þe resoun. and þis moueþ many men mekely to suffre whateuere comeþ to hem, for so biddiþ charite.

Do God's will and bear his chastisement.

¹ weren probably omitted.

XXII.

TRACTATUS DE PSEUDO-FRERIS.

I REGARD this tract as almost certainly Wyclif's, and in this I am supported by Mr. Arnold's opinion, who omitted it only because he had printed so much invective against the Friars. It has an interest as showing that Wyclif felt it necessary to justify his attacks upon the Mendicants, though it must be owned that the apology takes the form of a renewal of the offence. But we must not disregard the 'pseudo' which forms part of the title, and is not forgotten in the text. What Wyclif inveighed against is the evil which followed from admitting and binding to an order men who did not live in the spirit of its founder. With a true follower of St. Francis Wyclif would have had much in common. Even as it was, he admits there were good men among them: as Paul and Nicodemus were among the Pharisees, to whom he delighted to liken them.

This higher temper may be noticed in his dealing with the practice of midnight prayers (p. 317). Such rising to pray he says may be good, or it may be a hindrance to a man whom God calls to some better occupation, and it is presumptuous to make a binding rule on the subject. So in his Latin sermons he says, "*Non observant omnia que Christiana religio precipit et observat, cum non observant mensuram*" (MS. Trin. Coll. Camb. fo. 195). Of his rougher humour there is a good specimen on p. 319, where he likens friars between whom there is ill-feeling to dogs in a sack.

Among the marks of authenticity we may note the incidental use of the doctrine of Dominion (p. 316) and of Wyclif's favourite point that it is impossible to tell of any man whether he will be saved or damned (p. 317). Another characteristic passage is that on p. 312: "*We graunten mekeliche that . . . we faylen in the heyghnesse of charite.*" Wyclif knew that his besetting fault was intemperance in attack. In a passage quoted by Dr. Shirley (F. Z. xlv. note) he tells us that he was accused of vindictiveness and spite; and in the tract *De Sex Jugis* (Lechler ii. 603) he says: "*Omnes enim cogitamus superflue, quomodo vindicta caperetur de hostibus Christi atque ecclesiæ, et potius cogitamus imprecando istam vindictam quam alia media misericordiæ, quæ sic injuriantibus cederent ad salutem.*"

I must not omit to notice that this sharp attack on the Friars contains no mention of the Eucharist, but I cannot on that account disregard the weighty reasons in favour of its genuineness.

Copied from the only MS., Dublin, C. v. 6. [CC.].

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	Many people cannot bear to hear friars spoken of as false, but we must do as God's law bids. We are bid to reprove sin; and as Christ reproved Pharisees we must reprove these new orders, which are Pharisees from Christians	p. 296
	We must not blame untruly, hastily, or on false principles; nor from envy, but from love	297
	Wrongfulness of trying to stop such language, since it is used by Paul	298
II.	There is good and evil in the orders. Some friars leave the convent and get better employment; yet they encourage the others who remain	298
	Their observances are superfluous. Christ's rebuke to Pharisees	299
	The New Testament forbids sects, but these orders make sects	299
	Covetousness of prelates and friars, who ought to take little and return much	300
III.	A sect is a new order, with a new patron and rule	301
	Christ's sect does not insist on clothes	301
	St. Peter's prophecies of the new sects and their evils	302
	How St. Paul speaks of them	303
IV.	See whether St. James spoke of these friars. He speaks of two religions: one pure, the other vain. The pure religion is that of Christ. Not kept by friars. Their various faults	304
V.	St. Jude prophesies of apostates and his warnings in their details correspond to the ways of friars	306
VI.	St. John's warnings against the friars	309
	His writings, like all other authors of the New Testament, teach us to reprove friars. They attribute ill-will to their reprovers, but God is the judge of intent	311
VII.	The fiend's elergy say that in reprovng them we make ourselves equal with God, whereas we are sinful. We acknowledge our sins, but believe that we are Christ's servants, and that we speak as he bids us	312
	Christ's example. Need of reproof	313
VIII.	The fiend gives six reasons to love these orders—	
	I. Their dress. But it is wasteful	315
	II. Abstinenee. Not true of all of them, and, if true, not necessarily good	316
	III. The exeellence of their prayers. They do not know that they will be saved. Their selling prayers shows a bad conseience	317
	Their rules are presumptuous	318
	IV. The holiness of the society. They are not all holy, nor is their united prayer necessarily powerful	318
	Good life the best prayer, and the cloister is often not the best life	319
	v. Their special prayers. Their prayers are not so good as the Paternoster, or Christ would have taught them	320
	VI. Their handsome churehes and appointments. These they ought to grieve for, since they are got by robbery, spoiling the poor, and injuring parish churches	321
	Christ warns us against these sects. We are bound to withstand them	323
	If we are shown to err, we will turn to the truth	324

Tractatus de Pseudo-freris.

Capitulum primum.

*[p. 81 MS.]
Many people dis-
like to hear friars
called hypocrites.

It is a duty to
reprove sin.
Matt. xviii. [15.]

One of Christ's
apostles was
Iscaiot.

Why should these
new orders be
above reproof?

Christ reprov'd
Pharisees.
Matt. xxiii. [13-
33.]

*For many beren heuy þat freris ben clepid pseudo or ypocritis, antecristis or fendis, or ony siche name, it were to telle what goddis lawe seyþ here, & bi lore of goddis lawe men shulden stonde stifly. ffirst men taken of bileeue þat þei shulden reproue synne; siþ crist techiþ þat ȝif þyn broþer synneþ in þee, þou shalt þries reproue hym; & fro þe bigynnyng of þe world til þis tyme was it vsid þat men shulden reproue synne for loue & worship of god. for it were al oon to lette þis & to lette men to be goddis children, and to forsake crist god & take men fulliche to þe fend, & so forsake cristis maundementis, & bi-come þe fendis seruaunt. But for siche an heresye somme men shulden suffre martirdom, & somme men make resouns, & somme men vsen here worldliche strengþe; siþ crist, heued of martris, deyede to destrie þis heresye, & alle hise martris aftir deyeden in þe same cause; and heyȝ prestis of þe temple wiþ pharisees þat crist reprouede weren more and betere groundid þen ben þe sectis of þise freris. Aftirwa[r]d men supposen þat þise freris may lytlyche erre; & bi dedis þat fame telliþ, þei synnen & harmen meche þe peple. Siþ crist welle of religion here chees to hym tuelue apostlis, & ȝit oon of hem was Sharioth, whom it was leueful to reproue — what vertu hauen þise newe ordris, þat ben copen in wiþ-oute ground, þat men shal not reproue hem, harmen þey neuere so myche þe chirche? hit were al oon to graunte þis, & ȝiue it vp to þe fend, & fyȝte no more in goddis cause, but assent to þe fend what euere he do; & it is al oon to reproue synne, & to reproue persones þat synnen. lord, siþ freris synnen ofte, why shulden not men reprouen hem, & ȝif al þe secte assenteþ, speke we sharpliche aȝen þe secte; þus spak crist sharpliche aȝen þe secte of pharisees, as matheu telliþ in eyhte woes þat

crist spak aȝen hem, & ȝit crist louede persones of hem, as weren poul and nychodeme. lorde, siȝ þise newe ordris ben pharisees fro cristen men, whi shulden not men by ensauple of crist speke sharpliche aȝen here synne? but in ilche werk god askiȝ ordre, & so in blamyng of freris. *Two þingis ben in þis ordre þat cristen men shulden holde; ffirst þat men þat blamen hem shulden holde treuȝe & not gabbe on hem; for al ȝif þise ordris vsen þis craft, ȝit þei don here amys, for craft of lyyng is not leueful, siȝ it is openliche aȝen treuȝe, & so it is aȝen crist, þe whiche is þe first treuȝe. & þus men may leuefulliche, but of hard, fyȝte, plete & scorne, but þe craft of lyyng is dampned generalliche, & þus cristen men shulden be war to putte falsliche blame on freris; & herfore many men speken g[e]neralliche of here synne, & leuen to descende to persones lest þei medlen fals wiȝ soȝ. & þus þei speken bi condicioun, or supposyng, or gessyng, þat ȝif freris don þus cristen men schulden be war wiȝ hem. neuerþelees we witen bi þe cours of goddis lawe þat þise men þat ben disposid & knowen defaute in certeyn persones shulden reprove hem in here beerd, but euere by mekenesse & loue. þus baptist reprouede heroude of his open synne. & officials and freris haunten ofte þis craft amys, when þei louen more monee or ordris þen þei don heelp of here soulis, & ofte þei punysshē men bi peyne þat god approueȝ not. þe oȝer condicioun of blamyng þat cristen men shulden holde is þat þei shulden blame no men 'bi enuye or coueytise, but algatis bi charite þat þei hauen to god & to his chirche; ȝhe, to þo persones þat þei snybben, al ȝif þei shal be dampned aftir, & þus noon man shulde curse an oȝer but for loue þat he haȝ to hym, as god dampneth neuer his seruaunt but for mercy & for loue. & þus in speche aȝen freris men casten to holde þise two, and ȝif þei faylen in ouȝer of hem þei cryen on god mercy & help; for wo is vs ȝif we ben stille, & speken not aȝen here synnes, wenne we witen þat þei synnen openliche aȝen bileue, & leden many soulis aftir hem by wrong weye as fendis don. & þus men supposen of freris þat somme

John iii. [1.]
These orders are
Pharisees from
Christians.

There must be
order in reproof.
*[p. 81b MS.]

Order requires
that blame be
true,

for all lying is
damnable.

Some men try to
avoid being per-
sonal;

but personal re-
proof may be a
duty.

John Baptist.

That blame be
not due to envy
or covetousness.

Reproof should
spring from love.

John vi. [70.] of hem shal be dampned, & þenne we witen bi þe gospel þat
 Some friars will be damned, and are devils, *[p. 82 MS.] þei ben quike fendis. lord, who shulde lette men to speke
 here as crist doiþ? siþ bi sicke comune speche *his lawe
 shulde be betere knowen, but as we witen not of þis frere
 wheþer he shal be dampned, so we kepen vs in oure speche
 but we must not say this of any one friar, but speak heartily against their errors. þat we clepen not þis frere a fend. but aȝen errours þat þey
 sowen men shulden speke hertliche; & bi sicke reprouyngis
 god may turne þise freris to goode, & kepe sugetis in goddis
 weye, þat ellis wolden go the weye to helle. & as anentis
 [2] Cor. xi. [26.] fals freris, resoun techiþ þat þise ben fals, & poul spekiþ þat
 Paul speaks of false friars. perile is in fals freris. lord, whi shulden men be lettid to
 Let them blame Holy Writ. speke þus, siþ goddis lawe seiþ so? dampne þou þis holi
 writ, & lette þou men to rede it, & releese here oblisyng
 bi comune vse þat god approueþ, & þenne þer is som colour
 to blame men þat vsen þis word, but freris ben oblischid of
 god & bi here rewele to seye þis word, & as þei seyen freris
 weren þenne & longe bifore, & somme false, what shulde lette
 þe holi goost to speke of fals freris bi poul.

Capitulum 2^m.

ȝit cristen men shulden be war in here speche aȝen freris,
 Some friars are good and some evil, & for somme ben goode and somme euele, men shulden
 specifie þise euele, & not reproue good wiþ euele lest þei
 erreden in blamyng here breþeren, & herfore cristen men han
 declarid hou men shulden knowe a pseudo-frere & what is good
 and there is good and evil in their order. in here ordre & what in here ordre is euel, as so myche of here
 ordre is good as is seid in goddis lawe, & as myche of here ordre
 is euele as discordiþ fro goddis lawe; but many þingis may
 be wel don, & ȝit þei ben euele knytted to-gedre; as tyme
 & oþer circumstaunce þat limiten peyne for a dede ben aȝen
 þe fredom þat crist wole haue in hise lawe. & þus þise goode
 Friars leave the convent, men of freris drawen hem fro here priuat rewelis & fro here
 lyuyng in comune, lest it neede hem to breke goddis lawe;
 and get work that releases them from the rules; as somme freris procuren to be bisshopis, somme to be lystreis
 and liue out of comunes, & somme to be wiþ lordis or laydis,

& somme freris to bi wiþ bisshopis; but þat þat þei seyn is best, as obedience to here souereyn & risyng at myd-nyȝt wiþ kepyng of here priuat reulis & sewyng of here chapitris, þise ben warliche put abac wiþ þe moost witty of freris.

But ȝit þer ben ouer-many *cowordis & foolis stondyng in þis fredom, siþ þey dar not reprove here comunes in kepyng of here obseruauncis, but dwellen in her naked habitis in tokene þat þei wolen turne aȝen. & certis in þis is noon wisdom, but errour on many sydis; for sicke kepyng of þise habitis techiþ þat þei lasten in þis synne, & consenten to þe first errours, as ypocritis aȝens god. and þerfore many men wolden consele þat þei casteden a-wey þise habitis & sich fool oblysshying, and token fredom of cristis lawe; & þus techiþ ilche word of crist, þat reproveþ þise newe sectis, for here newe obseruauncis to whiche þey oblischen hem so myche smacchen som weye ypocrisie, or ellis þey ben superflue, and oblischen men wiþ-oute chesoun aȝen þe fredom of cristis lawe.

*[p. 82b MS.] yet they encourage those who remain to keep the rule, and themselves wear the habit,

which they should cast away.

Their observances are superfluous, and are against the freedom of Christ.

& herfore crist clepiþ so ofte pharisees ypocritis, & seyþ: “ffle ȝee fro sourdou of pharisees, þat is ypocrisye, for þei ben blaunchid wiþ-oute as sepulchris, and wiþ-inne ful of fylþe.

Luke xii. [1.]

Wo be to ȝou, pharisees,” seyth crist, “þat ben hud monumētis; and men wandrynge on hem knowen not þe filþe wiþinne. oon of þe wyse men of lawe onsuerede to crist, and seyde þus: mayster, seyng þise þingis, þou makest to vs greet strif. and crist seyde to þis man: & wo to ȝou, wise men of lawe, þat chargen men wiþ birþins þat þei may not bere, and ȝee wiþ ȝoure oon fynger touchen not ȝoure makid birþins.”

Christ's rebuke to Pharisees, Luke xi. [44.]

and to lawyers.

& here men taken of cristis wordis þat men shulden not lette to speke for god, al ȝif þei suffren harm for here speche; for crist tolde more sharplike þis wo, when þis lawere hadde tolde þis perile. & men may see of þe same word þat consenten to sicke ypocritis ben in þe same dampnacioun, siþ crist seyþ: “and to ȝou be wo.” Also bi þe newe lawe ben sectis ofte reprovēd, & noon drede þise newe ordris maken diuerse sectis, & so bi oure bileue þise ordris ben reprovēd. “I woot, seiþ poul, þat aftir myn discess wolues of raueyn shal

These orders make divers sects. St. Paul's warning. Acts xx. [29.]

come in to þe chirche, and þei shal not spare þe floe. & of
 ʒou silf shal rise wicked men, spekyng peruerse þyngis, so
 þat þei leden disciplis aftir hem. & herfore wake ʒee, &
 þenke onne hou bi þre ʒeer nyȝt & day y ceessed not bi teris
 monestyng ilche of ʒou; & now y commende ʒou to god and
 to word of *his grace, whiche is myȝty to edifye & ʒiue
 heritage in alle halewid. but siluer and gold or cloþ of non
 of ʒou coueytide I, as ʒee ʒoure self witen, for to neede of
 þyngis þat i hauede and to hem þat weren wiþ me ministreden
 þise hondis, bi trauel þat i me self dide. alle þise þyngis
 haue i shewid to ʒou, for men þat trauelen þus moten take
 sike men & helpe hem wiþ sicke goodis, & haue mynde of þe
 word of þe lord ihesu, for he seyde þat it is more blissid
 more to ʒiue þen to take.” Þise wordis of holi writt, siþ þei
 ben feyþ of cristen men, ben more to preyse þen alle propre
 rewel of þise newe ordris; for here autours weren lesse worþ,
 & hauen neede þat þe pope conferme hem. for poul was
 betere & myhtyere þen alle þe patrouns of þise new ordris;
 & non pope confermeh holi writt, siþ it is first confermed of
 god. & noo drede poul telliþ here a rewele þat cristen
 men shulden holde, & first men may see here hou poul
 propheciede soþ of comyng of þe newe sectis in-to þe chirche,
 boþe oon & oþer, & hou þei shal be wolues of raueyn & not
 spare þe floe þat þei ben inne; for what prelat or religiose
 spariþ to pile þe comune peple, but coueytiþ gold & siluer
 & cloþ, fare þe peple neuere so euele. as freris when þei
 beggen of men þenken not hou þei ben ryche þen pore men
 þat þei beggen of, þat hauen greet neede for hem & heoris
 to þyng þat freris tillen of hem, and certis þis spoylyng is
 falsere þen open raueyn of dai þeues. But poul tauȝte aftir
 hou he laborede, to ʒiue ensauple to men aftir þat þei
 shulden not bilde hem castels & liue oon pore men bi
 beggerye. for it is boþe needeful to men to ʒiue & to take
 of here bretheren; but þe first condicioun is betere, & þerfore
 crist & poul useden it. and prelatiþ þat hauen cure of soulis
 loken hou scarsly þei may liue, & wiþ hou lytil of sicke almes

*[p. 83 MS.]

These words have more authority than the rules of orders, which needed the Pope's confirmation.

Paul prophesies of the new sects.

Covetousness of prelates and friars,

who are worse than day thieves.

It is better to give than to take.

Let prelates look that they live on as little as possible,

þei needen to charge þe peple, & hou largeliche þei ȝeuen and give back
liberally teaching
and example.
 aȝen lore and ensauple of holynesse. þis rewle siþ it is
 bileeue *shulde be studied of alle þise sectis, & not take an *[p. 83b MS.]
 oþer lesse good but ȝif þat þis rewele faylede; & herfore poul 1 Cor. i. [14] and
iii.
 heriede god þat he brouȝte not in sicke sectis, but by clene
 lore þat crist tauȝte poul liuede & tauȝte oþer. studie wyse Let wise men
study these words
of Paul, and see
if these sects are
evil.
 men on þis word of poul, & loke þei riȝtliche wheþer þise
 sectis ben euele & worþi to be left bi goddis lawe, & to be
 spoken aȝen sharpliche. & þerfore seyþ poul to conforte men,
 hou þei shulden haue mynde of cristis word, & hou crist shal
 ȝiue to men þat louen hym word & grace to reproue hem,
 & þis word moueþ summe men to speke aȝen þise new ordris.

Capitulum 3^m.

It were to wite ouer þis what goddis lawe meneþ bi þise
 sectis; & it semeþ to many men þat a secte is a newe ordre A sect is a new
order, with a new
patron and a new
rule.
 bi newe patroun & newe lawe, as was þe secte of cristen men,
 and crist haueþ ful autorite to make sicke a blessid secte for Christ was the
founder of a new
sect,
 hym & hise þat comen aftir to þe ende of þe world. ȝif
 a cristen man haue a custom þat profitiþ to hym for a tyme,
 but he haueþ non patroun ne rewele but crist & lore þat he which men should
not leave,
 haþ ȝiuen, he makith not a newe secte oþer þen secte of cristen
 men. & ȝif benet or dominic or fraunciss or bernard or angel
 of heuene make a newe secte upon cristis secte, he is herfore
 worþi to be blamed; & þis secte shulde be despisid & cristis
 secte shulde be holde clene, as þe secte of macame the takith Mahomet's sect
takes much of
Christ's, but
varies, and so do
these new orders.
 meche of cristis secte, but it varieþ in som rewele & in cloþis
 & in patroun, & so don sectis of oure newe ordris, & of boþe
 þise prophecies poul. Crist groundede not his secte in sich Christ laid no
stress on clothes,
 changyng of cloþis, but in rewle of vertues þat ben vnsensible
 to men, & tolde nouȝt bi sicke abitis, but in as meche as þei
 helpeden to vertues, & þus men shulden not be weddid wiþ
 hem, but change hem lest here loue erre. & þus seyen summe
 þat these freris habitis to whiche freris ben þus oblishid, þat as the friars do,
 ben þus large & variaunt as weren habitis of pharisees, *seruen *[p. 84 MS.]

His religion takes
now one habit,
now another; as
he did on Good
Friday.

Habits a pretence
of holiness.

[2] Peter ii. [1.]

Let people judge
if these sects do
not love their
patron better
than Paul,
and if their order
does not make
them love Christ's
rule less.

Is he not a fool
who changes a
good order for
one grievous and
imperfect.

[2] Peter ii. 2.]

To love their
orders more
than Christ's
*[p. 84b MS.]
is spiritual
lechery.

þe fend to putte in lesyngus & to destrie pore mennus goodis. Cristis religion telliþ lityl bi siche sensible habitis, but now takiþ oon & now an oþer, as dide crist on good fryday. for þise habitis crien to þe folc holynesse & stablenesse, þat god wole haue hid to hym, & þus þei ben ofte false signes & garnementis of ypocritis, as crist clepiþ ofte pharisees. And þus seiþ petre in his book, þat is aboue alle þise patrouns, Soþeliche þer weren fals prophetis¹ in þe peple, as shal be in þou mastris of lesyngis, þat shal brynge in sectis of loss, boþe of religioun & soul, as men mai openliche see now, & þei denyen þat lord þat haþ bouzt hem, ihesu crist. for when þei leuen cristis secte, or louen it lasse for þise newe sectis, þei slaken in þis here loue to crist, & þus þei ben cursid of hym. & iuge þe peple wheþer þise sectis louen here patroun betere þen poul or oþere seyntis, þat weren betere to-fore god þen þise patrouns, & louen lesse þe rewele of crist & cristis ordynaunce for here ordris, & here dedis wolen openliche shewe þat þei don þus wiþ-oute cause. whi shulden not þise sectis be reproued? siþ þei ben þus sectis of lesyng; not of leesyng of worldliche worship ne worldliche vauntage, as we may see, but of lesyng of vertues & of blisse for here vnkyndenesse. And herfore seiþ petre aftir, þat þise sectis leden vp-on hem hasty lesyng of vertues & blisse bi here chargyng wiþ newe ordris. who wolde seie þat he ne were a fool þat hauede a good ordre þat myȝte not faile, & ȝit bryngiþ in a nēwe ordre þat is boþe heuy & vnperfȝt, & lettiþ þe first parfyt ordre boþe to be loued & holden. Juge þe peple wheþer þise freris bi here newenesse þat þei han founden breken ofte cristis ordre, boþe to hem & to þe peple. And þus seiþ petre aftir, þat many shal sewe her lecheryes, bi whom þe weye of treuþe shal be blasfemed. It is knowen þyng now þat many louen more þise newe ordris þen þei louen þe ordre of crist, & don more worship to hem, & þis is gostliche lecherie fro crist þe spouse of þe chirche, * & þis

¹ propheris MS.

is opone blasfemye siþ roten ordinaunce of men is more worshipid & more told bi þen þe ordinaunce of crist. Petre telliþ aftir of þe frut þat comeþ of siche newe ordris: In [2 Peter ii. 3.] coueytise wiþ feyned wordis þei shal chaffare of 3ou. It is knowen hou þe pope wiþ his court chaffariþ wiþ simple men Sale of benefices and absolution. in *beneficis* & assoilyng, & certis þis is a newe secte founden ouer þe secte of crist; & þus chaffaren possessioners bi auarice wiþ seculer men; & þise freris chaffaren now, & sillen cuntrees to begge; & in alle þise wordis ben feyned of gostliche suffrage wiþ-oute grounde. þus regneth chaffaryng of prestis and lewid men by auarice. But petre telliþ aftir to what ende þise sectis bryngyn men: “To þise sectis ceessiþ not þe iugement þat is now & bifore tymes, & here leeing nappiþ not.” Noo man dredid þat haueþ witt þat petre ne reprocude here þise sectis. what cristen man shulde not speke aȝen hem bi autorite of crist & petre? ȝif petre prophecyede not þise sectis, telle þei what þe wordis of petre menen. Peter’s prophecy is clearly of these sects. And of þise sectis spekiþ poul to his disciple tymothe: [1] Tim. iv. [1.] “þe holi gost seiþ openliche þat in þe last tymes summe shal depart fro bileeue, takynge hede to spiritis of errour & to loris of fendis, þe wiche fendis speken lesyng in ypocrisie; hauynge here conscience brent wiþ hoot yren of coueytise; & forfenden to wedde, & abstenen fro mete, þat god haþ ordeyned to trewe men to take wiþ þankyngis of god, & to hem þat han knowe trewþe.” Here ilche man on goddis half shulde trowe þise wordis of poul, siþ god seyþ hem openliche to hym. & þus it semeþ þat poul wolde mene þat Paul’s words refer to these orders. in tymes of þise ordris men departen fro bileeue þat þei shulden haue of cristis ordre, & many taken ouer-mechē hede to gostliche men of þise ordris, þat erren as ypocritis & magnifien here owen ordris. & non drede siche seniours ben fendis þat speken lying in ypocrisie, & þei hauen here conscience brent wiþ fier of coueytise, for al þat þei may gete to here ordre, of men or of worldliche goodis, þei þenken þei geten newe to god, þat god is wel payed þerwiþ, & þus þise ypocritis *letten to wedde boþe of prestis & of nunnes, & bi *[p. 85 MS.]

þis þei fallen in foul leccherie, leuyng þat þat god haþ grauntid; & þus þise freris forberen fleshe þat crist vsede & grauntede to ete. & þus þes newe obseruauncis don harm
 [2] Tim. iii. [5.] to þe chirche many weyes. & þis applieþ poul to sectis þat hauen licnesse of pitee, but þei denyen þe vertu þer-of; for þei hauen non conscience to robbe pore men to magnifie here new ordris, & to fordo cristis ordinaunce; but hou deneyen not þise men þe vertu of pitee to god and man?

Capitulum 4^m.

See we what James seiþ þat wroot to tuelue kynredis, & so to alle cristen men, wheþer he speke ouht of freris. but ȝif god spake here of freris, certis þei ben not wiþ hym, & crist seiþ: "who þat is not wiþ me, he mot neede be aȝen me."
 Matt. xii. [30.]
 James i. [27.] Jamus telliþ of two religions; þe first is clene wit-oute wem, & þis mot nede be cristis religioun, boþe for þe patroun & þe rewele; þe secounde is veyn religioun, & þat haueþ oþer patroun and rewele. James seiþ þat clene religioun & wiþoute wem bifore god & þe fader is þis, to visite moderlees children & widewis in here tribulacion, & kepe hym silf wiþoute wem fro foulyng of þis world. James spekiþ not heere of þe ordris þat holden here castels or liuen as ankeris, but of þe religioun þat crist haþ ordeyned to fiȝte wiþ þe world & profite to needi men, as crist dide wiþ hise apostlis. And ȝif þou seiþ þat freris visiten modirlees children & widewis; soþeliche þe fend visitiþ men, but to deceyue hem & harme hem; & þus þise freris visiten men, but riche men in heere welfare. And cristis ordre biddiþ men to kepe hem vnfoulid fro þe world, but freris seldem or neuere but when coueytise fouliþ hem; for when þei visiten pore men or widewis, þei don to gete goodus of hem, as corn, monee, chese or som-what þat nedith more hem þen þe freris; & þus þei helpen hem not in tribulacioun, but to deceyue here bodi & soule. & herfore seyþ iames aftir, þat rewle or wisdom of þise ordris is worldliche, beestliche, & fendliche, & þis is veyn religioun.

The pure religion of which James speaks, is that which Christ ordained.

Friars visit, but it is the rich;

or, if the poor, it is to get from them what they can ill spare.

James iii. 15. The wisdom of these orders is earthly, sensual, devilish.

þe rewele is first worldliche, *for þei ben ouercomen of þe *[p. 85b MS.]
world, & speche of men plesih hem not but ȝif it turne hem to
worldis vynnynge, & sich a rewele mot neede ouercome þe
flesh of sicke freris, for þei seken lust as bestis, & coueyten
likyngis of flesh. & þis rewele is þe deuelis; as þe deuel is
here patroun in þis, “& þere,” seiþ James, “is enuye & strif
where sich a veyn religion regneþ.” But þe rewele of clene
religioun haueþ eyȝt condiciouns þat iames telliþ. “ffirst it is
chast, pesible, temperat, treftable;¹ assentyng to goode þingis,
þer-wiþ ful of mercy, ful of goode fruytis, & iugih wiþ-oute
feynyng.” Juge wise men wheþer þise eyȝte ben kept in þe
ordris of freris. Bodiliche chastite is ofte broken, but oftene
chastite of soule; ffreris fiȝten in mong hem silf, & helpen to
fiȝte aȝen reeaurus; ffreris hauene a newe maner in alle þe
dedis þat þei don heere, but þe old maner was ful good þat
crist ȝaf to hise disciplis. þe apostlis weren so treftable, þat
ȝif men tauȝten hem a betere ordre or þat ouȝt of here bileue
were fals, þei wolden sone assente to treuþe; but þis þing
myȝte not be, for stablenesse of here patroun. ffreris mai be
pleynliche conuict boþe of here ordre & heere treuþe, & ȝit
heere pride lettih hem to assente² to þis treuþe, boþe of here
ordris & heere opiniouns; but þei seken mannes help & fals
dilayes to lette knowyng of treuþe, & þus þei consenten not to
good, but bi heere power striuen aȝen it. And when þei
spoylen pore men, þei ben not ful of mercy, but louene betere
stones of heere housis þen pore men or oþere freris. Hem
wantih good fruyt, when þei pursewen trewe prestis bi
gabbyngis & bi gylis for þei prechen freliche þe gospel.
fflateryng þat þise men vsen tellih þat þei iugen not wiþ-oute
feynyng. þis is þe veyn religioun þat James spekih of; “for
who euere weneth þat he be religiose, & refreneþ not his
tunge, but deceyueþ his herte, þis mannes religion is veyn.”
þise freris ben doumbe in many placis when *þei shulde speke
to heere bretheren of þe treuþe of goddis lawe & oþere weyes
þat helpen to vertues; but when þei comen out of þis prisoun

James iii. [17.]
The eight condi-
tions of the rule
of pure religion

not kept by the
friars.

Apostles were
willing to learn.

Friars strive to
prevent the truth
being known.

This is the vain
religion of which
James speaks.
[James i. 26.]

*[p. 86 MS.]
These friars are
dumb when they
should speak,

¹ trefatable MS.

² assento MS.

but ready to tell lies. *þei ben dilaui in heere tungis in gabbyngis & other iapis þat sounen not to charite : Juge men wheþer ony freris ben siche*

[James ii. 9.] *þat hauen sich veyn religion. James telliþ aftir bi cristis rewele þat men shulden not accepte persones ; but men seyen þat freris don, boþe of here breþeren & oþer men, for ȝif a frere be a maister or a riche frere in mong hise breþeren, he shal be loutid & worshipid more þen cristis lawe techiþ ; & þus freris worshipen secular lordis, to gete worldliche help of hem. & þus freris speken bi goddis lawe, but þei don euen þe reuers, as crist seiþ of pharisees, þat þei seyen but þei don not. þus freris reden in goddis lawe, þat þei shal not be makid maystris, & þis þei coueyten wiþ þe synne, wherfore þis maystirship is forfendid. & þus iames forbediþ cristen men to be riche here, for rust & wormes destrien heere richesse, & þat doiþ harm to þe comunes ; but ȝit þise freris gederen monee & oþer goodis to hem self, & ben propre in heere hauyng aȝen þe rewle of charite, & but ȝif þise wordis of iames don for þise ordris, I am certeyn þat non word of iames approueþ þise newe religions.*

They speak by God's law, but do the reverse ;

covet to be masters,

James v. [1-3.]

and to heap up riches.

Capitulum 5^m.

Se we ouer þis what iude seiþ of apostataes of þise ordris, hou þei weren first punyshid of god in tyme of þe old lawe. for cristis religioun lastiþ euer, boþe to þe dai of dom & aftir, & alle þise newe religiouns moten haue ende þenne or bifore. Jude seiþ þat þise apostataas ben in heere metis filþis, þat feeden men wiþ-oute drede, feedynge hem self ; & þus freris, for heere metis þat þei hauen of lordis & bishopis, feeden heere soulis aȝen bi fablis, & ben a-boute to hyde heere synnes, but certis largenesse of heere abitis hydiþ not synnes fro god. þei mai blynde men for a tyme bi here feyned absolucions, but whenne men shal rekene bifore crist in day of his last iugement, þere þise habitis shal be a weye, *þise rewelis & þise religiouns, & religion of cristis lawe shal shyne þen-ne for kepyng þer-of ; for ypocritis shal be depperst dampned of alle þe fendis þat shal be in helle. Jude seyþ

Jude 12.

Friars, for the meat they have of lords, feed their souls with fables. Their habits cannot hide sins from God,

*[p. 86b MS.] since they will be away at the judgment day.

aftir, þat þise men ben cloudis wiþ-oute watir, þat ben boren Clouds without water
 aboute wiþ wyndis; & þis a-cordiþ to fals prestis, for
 philosophris seyn bi resoun þat it is eir of pestilence when it pestilential,
 semeþ to reyne & reyneþ not, as it falliþ bi sicke cloudis, for
 þei letten þe liȝt of heuene & temperen not þe erþe bi reyn.
 & þus it falliþ gostliche bi men þat shulden preche goddis such are men that should preach and do not.
 lawe, & letten to teche þis lawe, & occupien sicke prelatiſ
 state bi gabbyng & fagyngis, & not bi reyn of goddis word;
 & þis is a perilose tyme of pestilence of mannes soule. Jude
 seiþ aftir þat þise ben heruest trees wiþoute fruyt, twyes Trees without fruit,
 deed, & þe rootis ben drawen up; & þus þei ben hydous trees.
 þis word shulde be dred of prelatiſ, siþ þei ben trees in þis
 world; & þei shulden bere gostliche fruyt as don oþer trees in such are prelates that bear no spiritual fruit. Mat. xxi. [19.]
 heruest, but þei ben wiþoute fruyt, as was þe fyge tree þat
 crist cursede, for neþer in prechyng ne good lyf þei profiten to
 þe peplis soule. And þus þei ben twyes dede, deed body &
 soule, deed in þis world & in þe oþer, deed in heere owen
 persone, deed in profityng to oþer men. And heere rootis ben
 turned up; for here loue shulde be hid, & bi growyng of þis
 roote þei shulden profite to mennes soulis; but ȝif heere loue
 be ficchid on worldliche þingis more þen on heuenliche þingis,
 þe rote is turned up, & þei ben drye, wiþoute fruyt. Wheþer
 þat freris or oþere men failen þus in heere office, iude
 prophecyde of hem, al ȝif þey weren not in his tyme; for as
 petre seiþ, “ cristis apostlis haueden clere spirit to prophecie.” [2 Peter i. 19(?)]
 And þise men ben boren aboute bi wyndis of vnstabilnesse, & Borne about by winds,
 heyhid to grete statis, now here & now þere, for hem wantiþ since they want the root of love.
 þe rote of loue þat shulde be picchid in goddis lawe, & þus
 wyndus mouen not þise trees to growe stableliche in þe
 chirche. Jude seiþ aftir, þat þise ben flodis of þe wood see, Floods of the raging sea froth-
 þat froþen heere owen confusions. *It is knowen þat holi *[p. 87 MS.]
 chirche is a ship in þe see, & þing þat moost noyep þis ship ing their own confusion;
 ben felle flodis of þis world; & ȝif freris hauen þise two, noo
 drede, god vndirstood hem here, & ȝif þei froþen bi irose fisege
 aȝen men þat tellen hem treuþe, noo drede þei froþen heere such are friars that are angry with those who tell them truth.
 owen confusion, & maken heere malice more knowen. & but

ȝif iude spak here of freris he spak in noo place of þise sectis.
 Lord, siþ crist & hise apostlis spaken sharpliche aȝens mennes
 synnes, & þei bidden þat we shulden sewe hem, whi shulden
 we not so speke aftir? ȝif a man be in despeyer of malice of
 þis wood see or þat men shal be helpid fro it, þenne is it noo
 boote hym to speke aȝen; but men hopen bi goddis grace wiþ
 sich sharp speche & trewe, þat somme freris shal be amendid,
 & þe peple shal knowe hem betere. And þus seiþ Jude aftir,
 þat þise men ben erryng sterris, to whom þe tempest of
 derkenesse is kept wiþouten ende. It is knowen bi philoso-
 phris þat þe sterre herid or beerdid erriþ fro heuene in his
 mouyng, & bitokeneþ pestilence, & so it is of wickid prestis
 þat erren fro kepyng of goddis lawe. & þus ȝif freris wolen
 excuse hem þat iude spekiþ not of hem, þei moten excuse hem
 first þat þei liuen not wickidliche, for euere men weren
 holden bi goddis lawe to speke aȝen goddis aduersaries. And
 herfore seiþ iude aftir, þat “enoc þe seuenþe persone fro
 adam prophecied of siche wickid men: lo, god comeþ in hise
 þousynd seyntis to make iugement aȝen alle wickid, & to
 reprove alle wickid men of al þe werkis of heere wickidnesse
 in whiche þei diden wickidliche; & of alle hard þyngis bi
 whiche wickid men han spoken aȝen god.” Men moten oþer
 denye god, or seye þat fro þe bigynnyng of þe world it was
 leueful to reprove wickid men. Whi shulden not men reprove
 siche freris? siþ god haþ ordeyned many þousynd to mayn-
 tene his cause aȝen þe fend. And herfore seyþ iude aftir,
 hou men shal knowe siche pseudoes. “þise ben gruccheris,
 ful of pleynt, wandringe oftir heere desyris, & here mouþ
 spekiþ pride, makege *persones wondirful bi cause of here
 wyunnyng.” ȝif freris ben not spoken of here þei moten liue
 þus iustliche, þat þei grucche not aȝen here pouerte bi þe
 cryng of here beggyngis. And ȝif alle heere cloþis tellen to
 men þat þei ben needi beggers, & þei wolen take of pore &
 riche al maner of godis þat þei mai gete, þenne þei ben fals
 & ful of playnt of þe pouerte þat þei han chosen. And ȝif
 freris after þis feyned pouerte wandren in reumes aftir here

Men hope by re-
proof to amend
some friars and
to open people's
eyes.

Wandering stars.

Nature of comets,
they betoken
pestilence;
such are wicked
priests.

Enoch's
prophecy.

The false friars
come up to Jude's
description;
murmurers, etc.

*[p. 87b MS.]

Their begging is
a complaint of
poverty.

They wander
after their own
lusts.

lustis, & chesen to ete wiþ riche men where þei may fare lustfulliche, & haue heere daliaunce wiþ wymmen for here leccherose lyues; who dredip þat god ne spak here bi iude of þise freris? And ȝif þei speken proudliche to men of heere ordris & of here persones; hou þei passen opere ordris & oper persones bifore hem in holynesse & in witt; & þus glosen persones wondirful, boþe of heere ordris & wiþ-oute, bi cause of heere wynnyng, who dredip þat god ne spak here of siche freris þat don þus? And iude mouep cristen men aftir to be war & reproue siche men: “But ȝee, ful dere breþeren, haue mynde of þe wordis þat weren seyð byfore of þe apostlis of oure lord ihesu crist, þat han seyð to ȝou, þat in þe laste tymes shal come gilours wandring aftir heere desyris, not in good religion. Þise ben þei þat departen hem silf bestial, & hauen not þe holy goost.” Juge men wheþer freris ben siche; & certis þenne god spak here of hem, for god woot al þing þat is to come, & warneþ his chirche of perilis of it. ȝif þise freris ben gylours boþe of men & of children, bi þe holynesse þat þei biheeten to robbe men of heere goodis, & wandren in cuntrees aftir heere desyris, to placis & persones where þei hopen to fare aftir lustis of heere flesh, þenne god spak heere of freris. And ȝif freris departen heere duellyng fro opere men, boþe lerid & lewid, & wandren not as crist or hise apostlis, more to edifie þe peple þen for lust or worldliche wynnyng, þenne god spak here of hem. liue þe freris bi goddis lawe & teche þei men þat þei ben not siche.

They speak proudly of themselves and their orders.

This prophecy is of friars. God warned his church of dangers to come.

Capitulum 6^m.

*Jon euangelist spak sharpliche of þis matere, boþe in epistel of his wisdom & in his book of priuetees; but for he spekiþ þere mystiliche, & fewe wolen þere approue his sentence,¹ þerfore leue we þis book, & speke we a word of hise epistlis. Ion seiþ in his book hou alle men shulden kepe charite, & so men shulden

*[p. 88 MS.]
Witness of St. John in his epistles.

¹ setence MS.

Men should love things according to their goodness, but they love according to the order.

loue þingis aftir þat þei ben goode. But here þenken somme þat freris failen openliche, for bi graunte of hem self opere ordris ben betere þen heeren, & ȝit þei louen more here owen þen þei don þe betere ordris. as ȝif men askeden of þise fourē sectis wheþer alle þise ordris ben euene goode, þei wolen seye anon: “nay, but oon is betere þen an oper;” & þus bi here owen speche þey tellen þat þey leuen þe betere and louen persones of here ordre not euene aftir þat þei ben goode, & so þis diuision of freris bi þise ordris þat ben not groundid makip a priuee enuye and puttip out loue of god; but certis þenne þei

[1] John iii. [15.] ben mansleers & of þe fendis religion, for ion seiþ þat ilche man þat hatip his broþer is mansleer. & þus it semeþ of heere lyues, þat many of hem ben irreguler; & þus in trauel of þise freris, When þei wandren aboute to preche, it semeþ þat þei louen more worldliche goodis þen heelpē of soulis þat þei visiten; & who dredip þat sicke ordris ne ben brouȝt in bi þe fend? þei leuen to proue bi goddis lawe heyȝnesse of þingis þat þei preysen so; but bi talis byneþe bileeue, & bi bull of þe pope þei prouen heyȝnesse of heere patroun & holynesse of here ordre. & þus seiþ ion soþeliche þat þer ben now many makid anticristis; for alle þise men þat ben aȝen crist in here loue, þei louen not moost crist of alle þingis þat ben. but þise men louedon more crist, ȝif þei haueden oonliche crist here patroun; for vnordynel love of here patroun departip hem fro hool loue of crist; & þus þei hauen not god here fadir, but somme patroun byneþe god; & þenne þei ben

[1] John iv. 3.] anticristis and fendis children, as ion seiþ. & þus seiþ ion, þat ilche spirit þat lousip ihesu is not of god *but antecrist, & þus þer ben pseudo-prophetis now in þis laste hour brouȝt in.

*[p. 88b MS.]

Various ways of leaving hold of Christ.

Men may louse ihesu crist on many maneres aȝens god, as he þat trowip not of crist þat he is boþe god & man, but trowip þe oon not þe other, lousip crist aȝen bileue. and þise men lousen crist þat maken hise membris heere special patrouns, & leuen to haue crist oonliche heere patroun, werbi þei louen lasse crist. & þise men lousen crist þat, bi heere prechyng or heere lif, maken þat crist is vnstableliche in mennes hertis

where he was bifore. & boþe freris and oþer prestis lousen crist on many maneres, & þus men hauen of holy writ þe names þat þei putten oon freris. Ion telliþ in his secunde epistle hou men shulden leue siche antecristis, & not receyue hem in-to heere housis ne greete hem in þe weie; & in mong alle þe remedies þat god spak aȝen siche men, þis is a special remedie of god, to which ilche man is holdon. for ion seiþ 2 John [11.] þat what man seiþ heyl to siche antecristis shal haue part of heere werkis for assent þat he ȝiueþ. & meche more ȝif a man A supporter of Antichrist is a traitor to Christ. norisshe hem wiþ hise goodis, or defende hem in worde & dede, for þenne he defendiþ cristis enmyes; & certis bi lawe þat men vsen þenne he is traitour to crist; & þis perile shulden men flee more þen perele of mannes lawe. & herfore biddiþ ion þat “men shulden assaye siche priuee men, wheþer 1 John iv. [1.] þei ben on goddis side,” for mony siche ben antecristis. & bi certeyn rewele of ion, ȝif ony siche louse crist, he is þat ilke þat men shulden fle, boþe in speche & in lyf. & þus ȝif it were wel studied ouer, mony of þise newe ordris shulden be þus fled as antecristis for diuision þat þei maken; & þus bi Thus we have cited all authors of the new law to justify reproof of friars. alle þe autours þat ben in þe newe lawe men shulden speke þus aȝen freris, when þei don þus aȝen crist. & it were al oon to men to lette þis in word or dede & to destrie bileeue þat god haþ ȝiuen in þe newe lawe. but as it is seyð bifore men shulden kepe hem in goddis boundis & kepe treuþe & good entent; & þus for charite of þe chirche & of freris speke þise wordis; * & certis þise wordis ben soþe, & ilche man shulde *[p. 89 MS.] graunte hem. But oon errour is in þis matere when freris Friars attribute bad intentions to their reprovers. continuen in heere synne, & iugen to what entent oþer men seien þise treuþis to hem. But here þise wordis ben suspect for many resouns of goddis lawe. It is propre to god to iuge God is the judge of intent. entent þat man haueþ; what fendis ben þei þat taken on hem to what entent a man spekiþ. Certis alle þe fendis in helle kunnen not see a mannes entent, & men shulden not in þis hye hem aboue fendis but ȝif god hadde beden hem þis. & þus men shewen hem nakid of resoun; when þat noon of hem kan proue þat þis sentence þat men seyen is fals bi goddis

The friars are like the Pharisees lawe, but trewe & sewynge of bileue, þey shewen ferrere hou þei ben disciplis of fals pharisees, þe whiche haueden þis maner when þei myȝten not denye cristis dedis, þat þei ne weren goode in hem self & ful of myraclis & grace of god, þei depraueden þe maner of doying, & þus crist in hise dedis. þei seyden som tyme þat crist was not on goddis syde, but wiþ þe fend, for he kepte not his haliday in doying of siche myraclis. Othere seyden þat crist dide þise wondris in þe vertu of beelzebub. & þus þei casteden to deprauē crist when þei myȝten not forsake þe treuþe; & þus þei shewen hem luciferis children þat wolen not amende hem self, but studien hou þei may deprauē men þat tellen hem treuþe to here good.

Capitulum 7^m.

The devil's clergy say that we make ourselves even with God, Bvt here grucchen þe fendis clerkis þat þus accusen men, & seyn þat þei ben clene of þis. But we ben coupable in þis synne; for we maken vs euene wiþ crist, & trowen oure wordis as we weren god, & forsaken þat we erren in entent as seyntis in heuene, but oure dedis & oure lif shewen openliche þe contrarie. Here we graunten mekeliche þat in þis & al oure lif here we erren ofte & faylen in þe heyȝnesse of charite, & herfore we weylen here þat we synnen þus in þis lif. & þus we wolen not be euene wiþ crist, but trow þat *we ben hise synneful seruauntis, & in vertu & worschip of hym we seyen þe trewþe þat he haþ tauȝt; & ofte we erren in entent & desyren veniaunce in rancour, but we ben war þat we seyn soþ & profitable to cristis chirche; & when þat god ȝiueþ vs grace we leuen errour of þis entent, & witen þat we shulden not leué here for crepyng in of siche synnes, siþ we shulden synne more leuyngē to speke sharpliche þis. & þus bi process of tyme we trowen þat god wole clenese oure entent, & þus when we ben in quiete we don þis moost for goddis worship, & also for profit of his chirche, & for good þat freris mai haue. Wel we witen of oure bileue þat we shulden sewe crist, but he reprocude men sharpliche þat diden þus aȝen god; whi

while we are sinful.

We acknowledge our sin,

*[p. 89b MS.]

but believe ourselves Christ's servants,

and what we say profitable to the Church.

shulden not we do so, siþ we graunten vs cristis disciplis?
 Petre ȝaf counsel to crist þat he shulde not þus suffre deep, as Mat. xvi. [22, 23.]
Christ's example.
 crist tolde bifore þat he wolde; but crist seyde aȝen to petre,
 for charite þat he hauede to hym: "Go bihynde me, Sathanas;
 for þou sauerist not þe treuþe of god." Here may we see
 openliche hou crist lettede not for loue of petre to reprove Christ reproveth
Peter, though he
loved him.
 hym sharpliche; whi may not men do so to freris, ȝif þei
 trespassen more openliche & to more harm of cristis chirche.
 Also we may see in þise wordis hou we ben holden to sewe
 crist, & to suffre peynes of oure body for more good of oure
 soule, & herfore bad crist petre here: "go aftir me Sathanas."
 Men þat wolen aboue cristis lore not sewe hym but go bifore
 ben sathanas, as petre was, but crist reproveþ þis in petre. Matt. vii. [15.]
 also crist telliþ þat "men shulden fle fro fals prophetis," & telliþ Christ's warning
against false pro-
phets.
 two condicions bi whiche men shulden knowe hem; ffirst "þei
 comen in cloþis of sheep," for ypocritis bigilen men bi þis.
 Aftir "þei ben wolues of raueyn," siþ for worldliche goodis þei
 feynen holynesse. & crist seyþ aftir hou men shal knowe
 hem bi þe fruytis þat comen of hem. ȝif freris shewen bi
 here dedis þat þei ben siche fals prophetis, * & cristis chirche *[p. 90 MS.]
 be harmed by hem, whi shulden not men teche here gylis?
 boþe for loue of cristen men, & for loue of þe freris; siþ crist
 biddiþ, þat "ȝif þin brother synneþ in þee, þou shalt snybbe
 hym." Othere we moten forsake crist, or telle here sharpliche Matt. xviii. [15.]
 as he haþ tauȝt. & þus we reden þat crist aftir þat he was Christ's reproof
to the disciples at
Emmaus.
 risen fro deed reproveþ sharpliche hise disciplis for here
 defaute in bileeue: "O foolis, & slow to trowe in þingis þat Luke xxiv. [25.]
 prophetis han seyde ofte." Lord, siþ crist reproveþ þus hise
 disciplis for loue of hem, and clepede hem foolis & slow to
 trowe, why may not men bi lore of crist reprove more foolis
 for more perile? & þis men shulden do sharpliche, for softe
 wordis mouen not þise men. And marc telliþ þat crist spak Mark iii. [21.]
 so sharpliche þat somme of hise disciplis seyden þat crist bi
 hise dedis was turned in-to woodnesse, & þus many men for
 sich slowþe of sharp reprouyng synnen meche, for sharp Usefulness of
sharp words.
 wordis byten ofte where soft speche shulde not moue; & þus

- 1 Sam. iii. 13. men seyen þat hely þe heyȝ prest was dampned, for he re-
proued hise sones but to softliche & slowliche; & in þis
synnen mony men, & herfore freris shulden loke wheþer þei
ben coupable in þis synne, & amende hem sone þerof, & iuge
John vii. [24.] not by facis of men, for crist biddiþ: "Ne wole ȝee iuge
aftir þe face, but iuge ȝee iust iugement of þingis þat ȝee
Isaiah vi. [5.] knowen wel." & herfore seiþ ysaie: "Wo is me for I heelde
[Ezekiel iii. 18.] myn pees." and god seyþ to ezechiel, "siþ he haþ ȝiuen hym
offys & wit, but ȝif he telle men peril & synne he shal be
dampned for þis synne." & þis moueþ somme men; siþ god¹
ȝiuen hem witt & power, lest þey disusen ȝift of god, þei vsen
1 Cor. ix. [16.] it when nede is; & þus seiþ poul: "Wo is me ȝif i preche
not," & telle þe peple heere synnes. & herfore god biddiþ his
prophete to telle his peple heere foule synnes. & þus seiþ
Tytus 3^o. [should be ii. 15.] poul to tite, þe bisshop, "reproue þou wiþ al comaundement,"
2 Tim. iv. [2.] & poul biddiþ tymothe to reproue, to preie & to blame, *but
*[p. 90b MS.] couenabliche & wiþoute ceesyng. poul biddiþ hym reproue
men, & þus men shulden not blame herfore, but ȝif þei
fordiden goddis lawe, & excuseden men at domes day of reprof
þat god wole ȝiue; but þis blasfemye dar not freris seye; &
Two sects— herfor men wolen trowe goddis lawe. Tuo sectis þer ben, &
þe oon reproueþ synne hardliche, & þis secte approueþ crist in
word & dede; þe oþere secte hidiþ² synne as antecrist & hise
The first, Christ's, clerkis. & noo drede þe firste secte is cristis lore, & þe oþer þe
reproveth sin; fendis; & for þe firste secte deyede crist & bi hym alle hise
apostlis, & þis þey tauȝten in worde, as we han told ofte
the second, that bifore. þe secounde secte þat hydiþ synne was in tyme of
hides sin, is lately boþe goddis lawis, but now it is late renewelid in þe tyme of
renewed. þise newe ordris; but noo man shulde trowe hem here, as noo
man shulde be frere but ȝif bi impossible god tolde man þat
Hiding sin is the he shulde make hym a frere; & þis hidyng is clepid pees
peace that Christ þat crist com not to sende in erþe, but to depart worldliche
came not to send. frendis for more loue þat men shulden haue to god. & þus
We need not wait ȝif men shulden leue to reproue til þei weren clene wiþ-oute
to be sinless be- fore reproving.

¹ haþ probably omitted.² biddeth MS.

synne, þey shulden neuer reproue here, siþ apostlis weren not wiþ-uten synne; but goddis lawe dampneþ þis, þat men shulden reproue a synne & wiþ þis synne more in þe synne þat þei reprouen. & þus kepe we vs fro greete synnes; & speke we wyseliche aȝen open synne; & who þat seyþ aȝen þis, he is on þe fendis syde. hou sharpliche þat men shulden speke aȝen synne, & bi what ordre, god mo teche, for hid synne þat man is inne lettij hym ofte to kunne þis lore. Wel I woot þat crist & baptist reproueden men for here synne & clepeden hem kyndlyngis of eddris; & god woot wheþer men ben now worse. lyue we wel, & triste we to god þat he wole ȝiue vs *concel* in þis, & haue we euere oure hertis to hym, and comune entent to plesse hym!

God must teach
us how to re-
prove.

Capitulum 8^m.

It were to wite ouer þe falshede of evidencis þat þe fend haþ brouht in to loue hise newe ordris. al ȝif loue be good ȝif it be clene in crist, ȝit vnordinel loue groundid in falshed is noyose *to men for many enchesouns. ¶ Sixe evidencis makyþ þe fend to loue þus hise ordris. ffirst for heere habitis; þat þei ben passyngliche holy, here gurdliſ & al here atier þat falliþ to hem, & ilche man loueþ kyndeliche holynesse of his broþer. But here shulden men wite þat holynesse is in þe soule & in noon bodiliche þing but ȝif hit springe fro þat, & ȝit it is lytil or nouȝt but ȝif it be groundid in treuþe. But men han told ofte þe cause whi þat sicke atieris myȝten profite. Boþe colours & figuris ben shapen to deceyue þe folc, to suppose þat þei ben holy þat hauen sicke signes wiþ-oute; but crist biddiþ þat mennus holynesse be hid fro sicke signes. & so þe offys of hem, who so vndirstondiþ hem wel, is to shewe heere ypocrisie & to hyde heere synnes wiþ-inne forþ. & herfore seiþ crist of pharisees þat “þei ben blaunchid sepulchris.” lord, what helpiþ wydnesse of habitis of þise ordris? it semeþ þat to þise tuo bi cast of þe fend; ffirst to make hem more hidliche to breede hem grete balyes,

*[p. 91 MS.]
The fend gives
six evidences
why these orders
should be loved:
1. Their dress.

Matt. xxiii. [27.]

Use of wide
habits,

to hide their big
bellies,

and to waste
God's goods.

The clothes are a
cover for hypo-
crisy.

*[p. 91b MS.]

Second deceit of
the fiend;
That such orders
abstain from good
meat.

They do not all
abstain,

some have too
much and some
too little.

Their rule con-
trary to the
Apostles';

for many of sicke ordris haue heere balyes for heere god.
þe secunde cause of þis wydnesse is wastyng of goddis good;
for alle goodis of þis world ben goodis of god þe cheef lord,
& he ȝiueþ hem to hise pore men þat seruen hym treweliche.
& so ilche þreed of sicke cloþis þat ben tuo wast & too
costliche berip wiþ hym a wrong boþe to god & man, &
specialliche when þise cloþis ben too riche & costliche. ȝif
þise cloþis ben gurde & more large in widnesse, þei beren on
hem more synne, for more ypocrisie in hem. And knottis þat
bitokenen penaunce hongynge bifore fro þe bodi ben signes of
ypocrisie & noon oþer holynesse; & þus widnesse of sicke
cloþis is an hord to hyde synnes, as gabbyngis & ypocrisie, ȝif
it be not superflue. & trowyng of holynesse of hem bryngip
in many heresies, þat þise cloþis ben more hooly þen weren
þe cloþis of crist. Siþ pilat myȝte haue be dampned al
ȝif he hadde dyed in cristis cloþis. & þus þise habitis of
þe newe ordris bleren þe eyen of þe peple & *hyden heere
priuey robberye, & oþer good don þei but lytel; but ȝif þei
verifyen iudis wordis, þat sicke ben trees turned vpsodoun,
for roote & inward of hem ben shewid wiþ-oute to þe world,
and falsnesse of here entent is hid fro men bi þis turnyng.
it shulde be knowen to cristen men þat alle sicke sensible
signes ben not signes of hoolynesse, but ȝif þei maken hooly-
nesse in men. ¶ þe secunde deceyte of þe fend bi whiche he
bigyliþ simple men stondiþ in þis; þat sicke ordris lyuen
scars fro good mete, & so scarsnesse of heere foode tellip to
men þat þei ben hooly. But here men seyen to þe fend þat
þise signes ben ofte false, for many of þise newe ordris liuen
lustfulliche in heere foode & þat men mai see wel bi growyng
& colour of here body. but þis may falle ofte tymes þat
summe breþeren of þise ordris faylen ouer-mech in mete &
drynk, & summe ben too wel fed bi vneuene partyng of here
goodis; & so þis poynt of sicke ordris stondiþ in þise two
þingis, þat where rewele of apostlis was to haue alle þingis
in comune & be partid to ilche as he hauede nede, þise ordris
don þe contrarie; & so siþ apostlis rewele was good, spring-

ynge of gooddis wille, þis rewele mot nede be euel & come of lawe of lucifer. Þe secunde fruyt of þis delyng stondiþ in þis poynt, þat siche etyng is priuee & hid fro oþere breþeren, & so it askiþ priuee housis & priuee seruice to performe it. & þus when holynesse shulde be hid, & lustliche foode shulde be exilid, þis delyng doiþ þe *contrarie* & comeþ of þe fend heere patroun. & þus þei don not oonliche in þis partyng wrong to heere owen breþeren, but to pore men wiþoute þise ordris whom þei spoylen of heere goodis. & se, when crist biddit hise disciplis to ete & dryngke þe metis þat ben in folc þat thei comen to, þise ordeynen þe *contrarie*, þat þei haue propre foode for heere mouþ þat passiþ ofte þe *boundis* of resoun. & þus when siche ordris han forsake propertee & take al in comune, þei aȝen heere owne ordre hauen heere properte in lust, & comunete in simple foode is forbeden bi here ordre, & poul meneþ to tymothe þat sich is blasfeme abstinence. ¶ Þe þridde deceyt of þise ordris is þat þei passen oþere in preyeris, boþe for tyme þei preyen & for multitude of hem. Who shulde not bye dere siche preyeris? siþ þei bryngen men swiftliche to heuene; & oþer men when þei slepen on nyȝtis hauen of hem preyeris at mydnyȝt, þat crien devowteliche on god bi clere voys, stif & clene. Here men seyen þat in þis poynt many seculers ben deceyued, for þise ordris witen not wheþer þat þei shal come to heuene, & so wheþer þat heere preyeris profiten to hem or any oþer man. hou is heere conscience brent, þat þei dar þus sille siche preyeris; & algatis siþ it is *proprid* to god to parte merit^{is} as hym likiþ, & noon man may approue hise merit^{is} but as god iugiþ þat it is worþi; & þus þis preyere of þise ordris is of a nest of blasfemye & chaffaryng of fendis preyere bi þe craft of symonye. & where þei maken hem a rewele to ryse reweleliche at mydnyȝt, þei passen crist & david & þe ordynauce of þe godhede¹; for god vndisposiþ ofte tymes men to ryse þus at mydnyȝt, & askiþ of hem a betere lif, þat þei

it comes from
Lucifer.

They wrong their
brethren and the
poor.

Luke x. [7.]

*[p. 92 MS.]

[1 Tim. iv. 3.]

The third deceit
is that their
prayers surpass
all other men's.

They cannot tell
whether they will
go to heaven.

To sell their
prayers shows
their seared
conscience.

Rule of rising at
midnight

not always profit-
able.

¹ goghede MS.

putten of bi heere statute. Crist duelled in preyere al þe nyȝt, but bi hym silf wiþoute sicke couentis; & so þise ordris holden not cristis rewele neþer in tyme ne in stide, for crist preyede wiþoute sicke crynge, lyk to þe state of innocence, bi hym self vndir þe cope of heuene. Sicke risyng may som tyme do good & ofte it doiþ yuel; & þus to ȝiue rewele wiþoute god were presumpcion of a fend, & to make a rewele þus to crie on god were a signe of blasfeme folye; as who seyde bi þe prophetis word: "crye ȝee fast, for ȝoure god slepiþ, or ellis he is in som priuee place, or ellis ocupied wiþ oþere men." *We graunten þat cryng profitiþ som tyme, but not to make þus rewele þer-of. hit is knowen to men of resoon þat many signes ben nakid to moue men þat preyeris of þise ordris ben betere þen oþer comune lyues; for fastyng comeþ ofte in robberis, boþe in watir & in lond, meche more þen ordris taken, but biddyng of god fayliþ hem boþe; & wakyng at mydnyȝt falliþ to þeues þat robben men; & ȝif þise outlawis passen þis rewele, it is for þei robben men priueliche, & herfore þey feynen oþere causis wherby heere preyere is so good. ¶ Þe fourþe cause in ordre is holynesse of here compaynye; & as many men drawen a ship or don an oþer dede of strengþe where fewere shulden not do þis dede, so it is in craft of preyng; many men when þey ben gederid preyen more plesingliche to god þen wen þei ben scaterid in twynny, or fewe to preye god herfore. & þis þei prouen bi mannes custom; when a peple wole preye a lord, þei gederen hem hool to-gidere, & preyen¹ mekeliche & wiþ knelyng. & þus men shapen for many massis to brynge a soule anoon to heuene²; who wolde not procure sicke helperis to preye god & shende þe fend. But³ here cristen men þenken þat þise wordis smacchen ofte falshede & blasfemye aȝen god, but hou sulden þei conferme preyere? It is seyð ofte hou þat þe couent of cristis apostlis passede alle oþere couentis boþe in

To make rules without God's leave is presumption.

[1] Kings xviii. [27.]

*[p. 92b MS.]

Thieves and robbers fast and watch more than these orders.

The fourth deceit is holiness of the company,

and force of united prayer.

Example from prayers to men.

Masses.

The convent of Christ's apostles was the best, but it contained Iscariot.

¹ preyem MS.

² heuenene MS.

³ Bub MS.

patroun & in rewele, & ȝit oon of hem was scarioth; hou many scariothis ben in þise couentis? & felowship of siche pseudoes lettij̃ oþer men to preye, for hou shulde þat man preye wel þat haþ enuye to his broþer & stondij̃ in queer wij̃ hym, oþer next hym or a syde? siþ siche daliaunce wole gregge his ire, & vnable hym to haue ouȝt of god. & þus þei faren ofte as don doggis in a poke; oon drawij̃ forþ an-oþer aȝen; but hou shulde sich drawyng helpe to drawe þe ship of holy chirche bi fisshis þat ben þus deepe in watir? many of hem wolden drawe betere ȝif þei stooden hem self al one. & þis blasfeme lickenesse, *þat comunen preyen þus to lordis, *[p. 93 MS.] tellij̃ openliche þis heresye þat þise newe ordris hauen here; for god for his grettnesse is in ilche place of þis world, & redy to helpe men soonere in what place þat þei lyuen betere. & þus as freris lyues techen, it were good to many men þat ben closid in þise ordris þat þei disporteden hem in þe world. for siche auentyng many times fordoij̃ enuye, ire & lust, & þise þre synnes ofte tymes letten þise men to preye deuoteliche; & þus it is open heresie too trowe þat þristyng of ordris in oon cloystre or in oon hous helpij̃ þat god heerij̃ hem betere, al ȝif þei liuen worse or ellis not betere to goddis pay. for al þing is present to god, & sich þristyng helpij̃ not to hym, but ȝif it make men worse, for the synne of oon persone bi siche þristyng foulij̃ more hise broþere. Lord, siþ disciplis of crist aftir þat he was went to heuene weren scaterid in mony cuntres, & weren not þrungen in siche couentis, what wit shulde moue þise ordris aftir to gedere hem þus aȝen skile? certis a fool may wel see þat þis resoun failij̃ foulliche, & crist gederede tuelue apostlis, þerfore antecrist shal gedre moo; god reyneþ in þis ordre, þerfore antecrist shulde ȝette in wallis. god wole þat men quiken þis erþe, & ben spred aboute in vertu of god, & þis tauȝten cristis apostlis fro þat þei weren quikid of crist heere maistre; [2 Tim. iii. 7.] but þise ordris wolen euere be disciplis & neuere come to knowyng of treuþe. & þus þei moten neede be euer punyshid as disciplis of antecrist, but ȝif þei lernen som tyme

A man cannot pray well when he stands next to a brother whom he hates.

They are like dogs in a sack.

*[p. 93 MS.]

God is everywhere, and helps men soonest where they live best. Many men would live better in the world than as friars.

In the cloister one man's sin injures others.

The apostles were scattered abroad.

The fifth deceit is that they pretend special prayers, more efficient than the Lord's Prayer.

*[p. 93b MS.]

[1] John iv. [1.]

No pope nor prelate has knowledge or power, but of Christ. True knowledge, etc., is shown in following Christ.

Let men show the goodness of these prayers by God's law or reason.

If these prayers were so good, Christ would have taught them sooner.

Paternoster the best of prayers.

to go out of þise newe ordris, siþ þei letten cristis lawe to
 renne & double profyt of hooly chirche. ¶ Þe fifþe deceyt of
 þise pseudoes stondiþ falsliche in þis feynnyng, þat þei maken
 a newe craft to preye & to loue god, & so þis newe craft is
 betere þen al þe ordre þat crist haþ makyd; & þus þei hauen
 special preyeris makid of newe bi þe pope þat ben betere þen
 þe pater noster, for more pardoun falliþ to hem. þise wordis
 may moue men þat wolen *folyliche trowe to hem, but ion
 biddiþ men to assaye spiritis, wheþere þei ben on goddis
 syde. & þus men ben not wiþ god, þat holden wiþ man
 more þen wiþ crist. Oure bileue techiþ us þat crist is boþe
 god & man, & so he is al myȝty, al witty, & al ful of good
 wille. & þus noon pope ne oþer prelat haueþ witt ne power
 but of crist, in as meche as he sewiþ crist bifore oþere of hise
 felowis; & so it is a feyned power, a feyned wit, & feyned
 good, al þat is not shewid in dede, in trewe sewyng of crist.
 & þus what man þat euere seiþ þat he makिþ betere preyere
 þen crist, & ordeyneþ þer-to more pardoun, blasfemeþ as
 antecrist; & þus þe old maner was betere to preye & to
 plesse god þen ony newe preyer mai be, hou euere antecrist
 speke here. Shewe men bi goddis lawe or resoun þe good-
 nesse of sicke preyeris, & þat þei plesen so meche to god as
 þei ben feyned of þis nouelrie; & ellis men shulden not trowe
 to hem, but have hem suspect bi maner of lif. Wel I
 wott þe fend may feyne sich goodnesse of hise preyeris
 & heyȝnesse of his power, for men mai not see it; & herfore
 he mai pursewe men but ȝif þey graunten þis excellence, but
 noon man shulde trowe þis but if God tawȝte it as bileue.
 And here is weye to antecrist, to pursewe cristen men for
 þei holden hem in þe boundis þat crist haþ ȝiuen to bileue.
 Cristen men trowen þis, þat ȝif þise preyeris weren so goode,
 crist wolde haue shewid hem bifore, when hise vikeris & his
 peple weren betere, & þus þei ben foolis þat trowen þis
 goodnesse of þise newe preyeris; for þe pater noster is þe
 best preyere þat ony pope or man kon ordeyne. for who
 shulde autorise þat god shulde more be payed of ony preyere?

& it is al oon to seye þat a *preyere* is *betere*, & þat it plesih god more; but who mai do þis but god? for god oonliche mai ȝiue grace & more accepte men to mede; & þus trowe we not in þise *preyeris*, siþ hem wantih ground. & þus ȝif *[p. 94 MS.] lif *of þise newe ordris be more medeful þen mannes lif was woned, it mot neede be grauntid of god, for newe ordinaunce is but fantym here; & þus siþ good lif of men þat ben wandrynge in þis weye is *betere preyere* to god, ȝif it plese more to god. What lif þat plesih more to god is *betere* Good life is the best prayer. *preiere* to god; as lif of a trewe plow man or ellis of a trewe heerde is *betere preyere* to god þen *preyere* of any ordre þat god loueþ lesse, blabere þei neuere so meche wiþ lippis. as it is likeliche þat baptist preyede *betere* bi hym silf in desert þen ony persone of þise newe ordris, for hise lippis ben lesse worþ; & þus *betere* lif helpih more to soulis þen massis or þise newe *preyeris*. Þe sixte deceyte of ypocritis, þat The sixth deceit is that they live honourably in church, house, etc. bigyliþ men in þis matere, is þat þei liuen honestliche in chirche, in hous, & in gardyn, & in alle ornamentis þat fallen to worship of god; who shulde not loue sich a sect, boþe bi kynde & bi resoun? Here men þenken þat þe fend vsih hise ypocrisie, & *contrarieliche* to crist moueþ men bi sensible signes. it is good & resonable men to haue chirchis in Churches are good, mesure, & in numbre, & in weyhte, aftir þe hooly trinitee; but þenne it is nedeful þat þei be makyd bi iust dispensis, but they should be built with regard to justice, and to profit of the people. & to profit of þe lond in which þei ben makid inne, & not do wrong to old chirchis bi weye of heere newe fyndyng; & so alle housis & placis shulden be shapen bi lore of crist. But somme men þenken þat freris bildyng failih in alle þise þre Friars' building fails in these points. poyntis. It is comuneliche makid bi slyh robbyngis of þe fend, so þat it is al oon to see bildyngis of þise newe ordris, & to see a fendis holde, makid of robberye of pore men; & so when men loken on heere castelis þei hauen matere to wepe, boþe þise ordris & seculeris, but specialliche þe pore When men look on friars' castles they should weep, peple. for ȝif we loken to cristis lif, he forsok sich bildyng, Luke xix. [41.] & lokyng on þe citee, þat he seyde was aȝen þe apostlis, he as Christ did over Jerusalem. wepte þer upon for greet synne þat it hoordede. & when

*[p. 94b MS.]
Matt. xxiv. [2.]

crist wente out of þe temple * & sat in þe mount aȝen it, hise disciplis for wondryng þer-of & to see his wit þer-of askeden wheþer he sau alle þise wondirful byldyngis. & crist answered to hise apostlis, & tolde hem hou hym likede herof: “Soþeliche i seye to ȝou, tyme shal come soone heraftir þat noon stoon shal be left here on an-oþer, þat it ne shal be destroyed;” and so it fel soone aftir, when ierusalem was destroyed. þre þyngis shulden moue men to be glad of sich

Such houses turn
away from the
state of inno-
cence.

byldyng: On, for it turneþ a-vey fro þe state of innocence; & herfore crist & baptist & oþere seyntis makeden noon siche.

Heb. xiii. [14.]

þe secunde cause þat shulde moue to be glad of siche byldyng is, þat god seyþ bi poul: “we hauen not here a duellynge citee, but we seken heuen to come.” & non drede

They lead men to
love this world.

siche housyng makeþ many to loue þis world, & to duelle in lustis þer-of, & leue loue of þe oþere worlde. þe þridde

They are built
out of the spoils
of the poor, and
are but a heap of
wrongs.

cause þat men shulden haue to loke on siche byldyng is þat þei shulden þenke on þe pore peple; hou ofte þat þei ben spoylid bi suttil fraudis of þe fend bifore þat siche housis weren bildid, þat ben but an heep of wrongis. þise þre causis shulden not ȝiue matere of ioie to men of resoun, but raþere matere of sorowe to telle hasty destruyng of hem. men may

The founders of
the orders or-
dained no such
buildings.

see ouer wheþer þise patrouns vseden þise housis in sich mesure, & leften in heere rewlis aftir þat heere disciplis shulden bilde þus; & siþ þe contrarie is soþ, to whiche þise ordris ben streytliche sworn, it semeþ þat þe fend shapiþ a disport to hise clerkis to serue hym inne. & so ȝif men chargen mesure, þise placis & bildyng of hem passen mesure þat god haþ tauȝt, & so þei ben agen goddis power. & ȝif we taken heede to þe noumbre of siche castel of þe fend, þey ben aȝen wisdom of crist, siþ he approuede not siche housis. for siþ in tyme of more wisdom þer weren chirchis & housis

*[p. 95 MS.]

These churches
injure the parish
churches.

ynowe, what wisdom * is it to multiplie þise, & destrye hoolyere old placis? certis iniuries ben don to parisshe chirchis bi siche newe chirchis of ordris; & ȝif þus wrongis of a place shulden lette men to herye god þere, siche placis of newe ordris shulden be fled as fendis holetis. And ȝif we

weyn aryht dispensis bi lore of þe hooly goost, þer is neyþer stoon ne tree in alle siche newe ordris placis þat it ne is groundid bi wrong, & temporid bi robberyng of pore men. They are built by robbery. & þus siche bildyngis makyn pride, & not comfort of goddis prisounneris, for þei ben not fed bi þis, but robbid of goodis þat þei shulden haue; & þis is not lore of þe hooli goost, but techyng of þe kyng of pride. & þus ornamentis þat þise Ornaments. freris ordris vsen ben toolis to bigyle þe peple, & to feede heere bodiliche eye, & robbe þe eye of heere soule, as somme of þise newe ordris hauen costly encenseris to encense beddis Censers to incense beds. of men & of wymmen & to spoyle hem. þus þei assoylen They absolve men long dead, who may be in hell, men þat weren longe deed byfore; & soulis of siche men ben in helle as somme men supposen; & þise blynde men þat assoylen þus kunnen not teche þe contrarie of þis. & þus þey doon þis for monee, & not for deuocioun, but ȝif siche blynde and do this for money. blasfemyes be clepid deuocioun of freris. þus ornamentis of ypocritis harmen þe peple þat þei duellen wiþ, & al heere lif doiþ harm to men boþe to body & to soule. & þus fendis children bygilen men bi þing þat hem semeþ good, & maken hem trow þat it profitiþ, but ȝit it doiþ meche harm. & siþ alle lyues of siche men ben ful of þe fendis deceytis, men Their deceits are too many to tell. sufficen not to telle heere gylis, but bi þis men may knowe somme. And here ben somme men moued to trowe þat crist spekiþ in his lawe of sich maner of ypocritis, to teche his peple to fle hem. for siþ crist is verree god,¹ & knowiþ *clereliche al þing to come, alle þise deceytis ben present to *[p. 95b MS.] hym; what shulde lette hym to telle hem? Certis charite of Crist shulde neede hym to warne men here. & þus resoun Christ warns us against these sects. Matt. xxiv. moueþ men to suppose þat crist telliþ of gilis of þe pope, & aftir of gilis of þise new sectis, for alle þise ben lemes of antecrist. whi shulde not crist telle here of hem? and þus þenken somme þat it were a medeful dede & good preyere to It were a good deed to withstand them. god to aȝenstonde þise new sectis, & clenese cristis ordinaunce fro sich errours þat ben brouȝt inne. Lordis, clerkis

¹ good MS.

& comunes shulden helpe here for mede of crist, & oldnesse of
 þise errours shulde not moue to leue hem, siþ god is myȝty
 ynou to helpe & destrye hem alle. þis entent hauen meke
 Meek men think that Christ's or-
 dinance is best. men bi grace & bileeue of crist, þat his ordinaunce was and is
 best, and oþer contrarie ordinaunce is euel; & bileeue techiþ
 þat [he] mai not fayle to helpe men þat trauelen wel here.
 Examine the
 reasons of those
 who attack us. Examine þou wel þe grounde an þe resoun of newe men, þat
 seyen þey holden þe lawe and þe ordinaunce of crist, & we
 If we err, we will
 turn to truth
 when taught. trauelen to destrye hem. for certis ȝif we erreden here in
 wit or wille bi fals lore, we wolden mekeliche a-noon turne
 to treuþe when it were tauȝt. Amen.

Explicit tractatus de pseudo freris.

DR. SHIRLEY says that this tract is the same as the Latin *De Eucharistia et Pœnitentia*. The latter is found only at Vienna, and I have not been able to compare the two. I have, however, no doubt that this is genuine. Its presence in the Ashburnham MS. tells much in its favour, while the evidence of style seems to me to mark it as decidedly Wyclif's. His predestinarian doctrines are incidentally referred to on p. 329: "who is he þat lettijþ god to saue men as he haþ ordeyned . . . before þe world was made?"

The attack on transubstantiation at the end of the tract shows it to be late.

Copied from the Dublin MS. CC, and collated with the Ashburnham MS. MM.

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Nota de Confessione.

*Two virtues ben in mannes soule by whyche a man shuld be rewled;¹ hoolynesse in mannes wille, & good kunnyng in his witt. hoolynesse shuld put out synne, & good² kunnyng shuld put out foly; but as wille haþ principalite to-fore witt of mannes soule, so hoolynesse is more worþe þenne is kunnyng of synful man. for wuckud aungels han myche kunnyng, but þei han nouȝt of hoolynesse. And ellis iche man were hoolier aftur þat he is more kunnyng; but poule seiþ þat mannes kunnyng bolniþ hym bi pride. but in oure lord ihesu crist was kunnyng & hoolynesse euen, for he was ful & heierst in kunnyng & heierst hooly, boþe god & man. and þus he seith in Iones gospel: “who of ȝou shal reprove me of synne,”³ as ȝif crist wolde seye to hem “y may not synne³ siþ I am god; and þus nouȝt may reprove me of synne.” but crist seiþ next aftur þat sith he seiþ treuþe; whi⁴ trowen þei⁴ not to hym? In þise two wordis þat crist haþ seid, may we see hoolynesse & kunnyng. and hou hoolynes goþe before & kunnyng sueþ in worþinesse; for lyue a man hooly lyf, and kunnyng I-now wil folow aftur. To make hoolynesse in men is confession nedful; and þerfor shuld hooly churche witt sumwhat of confession. Confession generally is knowlechyng made wiþ wille; and sum confession is made wiþ-oute synne, and sum is knowlechyng of synne; & boþe þise two ben goode in man, but þe first is more worþe in crist. Mathew telliþ hou crist confessed to his fadur, ⁵lord of þis world,⁵ & ȝitt crist myȝt not synne, and þis confessioun myȝt not be veyne. Confessioun þat man makith of synne is made of man in two maners. Summe is mad oonly to god truly by herte or mouþe. And sum confessioun is made to man, and þat may be on many maneres; ouþer opynly & ⁶generaly, as men

Holiness should rule a man's will; knowledge his wit.

Holiness of the more importance.

[1] Cor. viii. [1.]

John viii. [46.]

Confession needed to make men holy.

Mt. 2^o.
[should be Matt. xi. 25.]

Confession may be to God; or to man,

open

¹ CC inserts in.

² þis MM.

³⁻³ omitted CC.

⁴⁻⁴ trowe ȝe CC.

⁵⁻⁵ omitted CC.

⁶ or CC.

or private. *confesseden in þe oolde lawe; Or priuely & rownyngly, as men confessen nowe-a-daies. whenne a man is constreyned by bodily¹ payne to telle his gilte, *he confesseþ not; but² confession mut be wilful, or ellis it is not medeful to man.*

*[p. 128 MS.]

C^m 2^m MM. It were to wite ouer in þis mater,³ wheþer priue confession made to prestis be nedeful to⁴ synful men, & wher þis confessioun is groundid. and it semeþ þat it is not nedful, but brouȝt in late be þe fend; for crist alwitty vsed it not, ne noon of hise apostles aftur. And if it were nedful to man, crist wolde have vsed it or tauȝt it. Whenne crist forȝaue marie magdeleyne hir synnes, he vsed not sicke rownyng; and whenne he forȝaue petir hise synnes, & poule his, & oþer men heren þat he clenlid, he vsid not sich rownyng in ere, ne sicke asoylyng as prestis vsen nowe; and þus whenne crist clenlid þe awoutrer, þat þe Iewes alegeden shulde be stoned, crist vsed not þis confession to hir, but bad hir go and wilne to synne no more. and siþ þat crist myȝt not faile in ordynaunce to hise chirche, & he left þis confessioun, it semyth þat it is not nedeful; for if it were, þenne crist faylid in leuyng it; and also petre & alle oþer apostles, and also alle oþer popis faileden þat weren til Innocens cam, whenne þe fende was loused, and ȝitt men weren clenlid of her synne picker & bettur þenne þei weren aftur, for I rede in þe boke þat luk wroto of apostles dedis, hou þre þousand turned in oon daye fro Iewes fables to cristis lawe, & noon of hem was þus confessid to prestis. as þe story telliþ,⁵ petir bade hem generally haue sorowe & be baptized ychoon; but god telliþ not here of shrifte, but þat þei token þe hooly goost; and þus here synnes weren forȝyuen of god wiþ-uten sicke confessioun as we nowe vsen. and þus it semiþ to many men þat cristen men myȝten wele be saued wiþ-uten sich confessioun; as þei were be-fore pope Innocent, and þus it semeþ presumptioun of þis pope to make þis lawe; for hooly churche shuld

Privy confession not needful.

Was not ordered by Christ.

John viii. [11.]

Acts ii. [41.]

Nor used in the early Church.

¹ omitted MM.² for MM.³ omitted CC.⁴ CC inserts þe.⁵ shewiþ MM.

not þus be charged wiþ newe lawes, *whenne oolde sufficeden; *[p. 128b MS.]
 and þus men seyne þat þe fend kest this for wynnynge &
 hiȝnes of preestis: and in token of þis defaute makers of þis
 lawe weren so marrid þat her lawe byndeþ noo persone but The law ordering
it is invalid.
 only suche þat ben boþe men & wymmen. þis semip a
 feendis presumpcion to him þat knoweþ not kynd of lawe to
 ordeyne lawe in sicke a maner,¹ of whiche noo sicke shulde be
 made. and þus it semeþ to many men þat antecrist haþ A device of Anti-
christ.
 cast þis cast to make alle men soget to the pope; & lede
 hem aftur þat hym likiþ. lord, where is fredom of crist
 whenne men ben costen² in sicke bondage? Crist made hise
 seruauntes free, but antecrist haþ made hem bonde aȝeyne.
 And certis þer is noo autorite þat gaue him leue to make
 men þus þrallis.

ȝitt it were to wite þe reson of goddis lawe whi men Cm 3m MM.
 shulden hoolde hem in here bondes, & not make lawe fro
 cristis ordre. It is oft seid in goddis lawe þat men shulden Deut. iv. [2.]
 not adde þerto ne take þerfro, lest þei failen, siþ it is made
 at poynt deuyse; and þus it semeþ a feendis presumpcioun,
 þat hiȝeþ himsilf a-bouen god, to make þus a newe lawe wiþ-
 outhen leue of þe furst treuþe. Also þis lawe of *confessioun* The law is against
reason.
 þat icke man mut nedis shryuen oonys in þe ȝer priuely to
 his propur prest, it semeþ opun aȝens reson. for a man may be
 baptized in tyme þat he³ haþ discrecioun, &⁴ anon aftur be ded
 wiþ-outhen doynge of dedly⁵ synne. lord, whi shuld þis man be
 dampned al if he shriue him not þus ⁶in þe ȝeer⁶? Ion baptist
 shroof hym neuer þus, ne any apostle of crist; and ȝitt bileue
 nedip vs to graunte þat þei ben seyntes in heuen. and þus
 it may fallen of many martyres, & of men þat han no propur
 prest. who is he þat lettiþ god to saue men as he haþ
 ordeyned before þe pope & his lawe camen inne, & before þe
 world was made? Also god gyueþ frely his grace, not-wiþ-
 stondynge mannes lawe. whi may not *god do grace to hise *[p. 129 MS.]

¹ mater MM.² castun MM.³ omitted CC.⁴ omitted CC.⁵ dely CC.⁶⁻⁶ omitted CC.

treue seruauntes þat seruen him wele, al if þer were noo siche prest nor pope? as sumtyme was non. hou-euer antecrist glauer, he letteþ not god to do his wille; for he may disseyue¹ foolis, but not god, hou-euer he speke. also beleue techiþ men þat if a man be contrite, god þenne forȝyueþ him his synne; but who may lette god fro þis? David spekeþ [Psalm xxxii. 15.] to god þus: "I seide, i shulde shryue my synnes aȝens me to þee, lord; & þou forȝauest me my synnes." lord, wher god be not as merciful as he was in þe olde² lawe? No þing shuld lett þer-to, but þat he becam man for mercy; & þus it seemeþ a blasfeme heresie to seie þat man³ may not ellis come to heuen, but if he fulfille þis roten lawe þat was þus late made of antecrist. Also god may not ȝyue occasioun to two persones for to synne, for þenne he were auctor of synne & contrarie to himsilf; but bi þis priueye shrift a frere & nunne may synne to-gidre; and close hemsilf in a chaumbre bi lok in-sted of feyned assoylunge; for I suppose as knowen þing, þat whenne a lawe is feyned wiþouten god, & of þis lawe comeþ myche synne, þis lawe ȝyueþ occasion to al þat synne; [Job xxxi. 1.] ⁴but þis lawe ȝyueþ occasioun to do so as it falliþ ofte.⁴ lord, wheþir god, þat seiþ bi Iob þat a man shuld make couenaunt wiþ hise wittis to þenke not on⁵ a virgyne, ordeyned sich a lawe to men, þat prestis & wymmen shulde turne her faces to-gider, & speke of lustful⁶ þoutes & dedis, which myȝt do harme to hem boþe; but þis lawe ȝyueþ occasioun to do synne as it falliþ oft. Also þus may lordus & laidis be nedid to trowe sich men, & lettid to holde goddis lawe, and to stonde for riȝt on cristis syde. lord, if iche lord of ynglond & his wiif haden two schariotis to lede hem & her meyne and her werkis to þe puple, hou liȝtly myȝt antecrist conqwere þe churche and distruyȝe cristis rewme?

Cm 4^m MM. * And ȝit men maken moo resons to meue þe chirche to knowe þe treuþe & fredam of goddis lawe, so þat þe churche

*[p. 129^b MS.]

¹ distroyȝe CC.
⁴⁻⁴ omitted CC.

² wolde CC.
⁵ wiþ CC.

³ he CC.
⁶ synful CC.

be not made bonde bi noo disceitis of *antecrist*, but stonde in þe same fredam þat crist haþ ȝouen. God ȝyueþ non occasion to *antecrist* for to synne; but bi þis feyned assoylyng he haþ occasion to synne in þe churche, and þus þis power is not of crist, wherby þis assoylyng is feyned; and þus þe fend mut nedis gabb whenne his prestis assoilen þus. for þus þe pope myȝt kepe to hym to name whom euer he wolde propur prestis, and make couenaunt wiþ þis prest þat he assoyleþ no man but if he ȝyue so myche mone; or ellis beheyȝt to holde on his syde, and þus *antecrist* myȝt soone conqwere lordshipes & eke rewmes to hym. and þus curatis & parishe prestis myȝten spuyle þe puple as freres done; and þus it were a benyfice to purchace of þe pope to be a propur preste þus. and it falleþ oft þat sich propur prestus ben vn-able to here shriftis; and þe maker of þis lawe may not make alle siche propre prestis able, and so he *constreyneth* men in cas to shryue hem to an vnable prest. but who shuld preise þis lawe þerfore? siþ yuel frute witnessiþ yuel rote. As¹ if a pope make a lawe þat who euer he lymtyþ to here *confessioun* of þis man or *confession* of þis comu[n]ate, he shal here þise mennes shrift, & he² is founden vnable aftur, þenne þis popis lawe wiþ treuþe in-dede may liȝtly ȝyue occasioun of syne. and if þou seist þat siche bullis of þe pope vndurstonden euer a *condicioun*; þat if þis persone bi goddis lawe shal profiȝt in³ fulfillyng of þise popes bulles, þenne þe popes bullis shulen haue strengþe, & elles þei shulen not stonde in stede: Certis if þise popis bulles shulen be undurstonden wiþ sich a label, þen-ne þei weren not profitable to þe purchasour ne to þe churche; *for who⁴ shuld take ony benyfiss of þe puple⁴ wiþ sich bullis, if his ablete shulde be proued in werk be-forē he were acceptid? soþe it is þe more able man to god shuld qwenche þis ablete of þis man; and þis skil moued hooly men to stryue not for suche ablete. but crist ȝaf reule

Possible abuses of confession.

The priest may be unfit,

or may become unable.

Pope's bulls licensing confessors are useless if not harmful.

*[p. 130 MS.]

¹ al CC.² omitted CC.³ into CC.⁴⁻⁴ who shuld not take eny benyfice of þe pope CC.

This confession
hinders preach-
ing.

If this law is
profitable,

Christ is to blame
for not having
instituted it.

Cm 5m MM.

The words of
absolution vary.

*[p. 130b MS.]

The different
forms.

The Greeks' is
the least evil,
being only a
prayer.

to þe Iewes to iuge hym able bi hise werkis, but wele men
witen þat neþer popis bullis ne traueile for hem by coueitise
makip þis man but more vnable¹ to gete ouȝt by suche
bullis. Also þis lawe is full suspecte, for it letteþ bettur
occupying, & askeþ werse occupyinge, þat is not grounded in
goddis lawe. þat prelate þat shriueþ shuld preche þe puple,
and he þat is shriuen shuld here goddis worde; but bi þis
shriften ben boþe þise lettid. and noo drede þei weren
bette, siþ crist vsed hem & not þis shrift, & bad hem be
vsed, & not þis. So it semeþ þat antecrist bi þis puttip cristis
ordynaunce abake; and we taken here as opynly knowen,
þat whenne eny harm comeþ of a lawe, & þat lawe is not
groundid in skyl, it ȝyueþ occasioun of þis harme; for reson
excuseþ not þis lawe, þat ne it makeþ blamefully þis harme.
and if it were reson in þis popis tyme to make þis lawe to þe
churchis profite, it were as myche resoun þat þis lawe had
ben vsed bi-fore þis popis tyme; but þenne weren crist & petre
& oþer popes to blame þat leften it þus. lord, what meued
þis late popes to make furst þis lawe, whenne þe fend was
vnbounden, and god meued not crist ne hise vikars to sue it,
whenne it semed as myche skil. wher þis pope was god of
heuen, so þat men² may not know his³ reson.

But ȝitt þer comeþ more harme of þis lawe of *confessioun*,
ffor *confessours* varien in wordis of assoylyng, as þei done in
wordis of her *cursyng*, & gabben commynly wiþ blasfeme
wordis aȝens beleue; and it is licly to many men siþ
þe pope kan not teche þise wordis þat prestis shulden seie
*bi goddis lawe, he can not grounde þis lawe in reson.
Summe prestis seyne symply "I assoyle þe of þi synnes;"
& leyne her hondes on her hedes, or ellis touchen hem wiþ
a ȝerde. Summe prestis seyne a more raunge; þei preyen
furst þat god assoyle hym, & afftur þei assoylen hym bi
autorite ȝouen to hem.⁴ þe þridde maner & leste yuel, þat
men seyn þat greks han, is þat þe prest preyep þat god

¹ vnableþ hym CC.

² god CC.

³ þis CC.

⁴ hym CC.

assoyle hym & leuyng worde of assoylyng; and þus he myȝt
 assoyle at home hym þat were a þousand myle fro hym.
 and lewed men þat weren bettur myȝten þus assoyle bettur Good laymen
might absolve
thus better than
wicked priests. þenne wickid prestis. ffor it is lichly þat a prest ordeyned to
 be dampned assoyleþ not þus; but what prest or man *con-*
fessid wot wher þis prest shal be dampned. and þis shrift þus
 brouȝt inne semeþ to marre þe churche in bileeue, as þe prest The priest makes
himself God's
fellow. made hym goddis fellow, as god and he shulden assoile to-
 gidre; or ellis þat god mut nedis assoile whenne þe prest
 makip his sygne. Suche many blassefemys aȝeynes þe
 beleue ben sownen of *antecrist* in þis mater, ffor god, þat
 ȝyueþ grace & is in þe soule, assoyleth & doþ a-wey synne,
 and þis may not þe prest do, siþ it is propur to god, and, siþ It belongs to God
to give absolu-
tion. no man shuld liȝe a lytle lesyng to saue þe worlde, a prest
 shuld not seye, “y assoyle,” whenne he not neuer wheþir god
 assoyle. ffor he knoweþ neiþer wher þis man *confessid* seye
 treuþe vpon *conscience*, or wher þat he be *contrite*, as he
 knoweþ not hym-self; and I suppose he wite þe soþe, ȝitte he
 knowip not þe quantite of peyne þat god wole þat þis man
 haue for hise trespase aȝeynes god, for penaunce is *arbitrarie*, Amount of pen-
ance arbitrary. now more & nowe lesse, aftur þat þe prest wole lymyte, be he
 neuer so grete a fool. And here spryngen many errours aȝens
 beleue on boþe sydis; for þe prest gedreþ hym ofte¹ moneye or
 money worþe by suche penaunce, and so bi priuey symony
 he harmeþ hem boþe & þe churche. and þus a frere or a prest
 haþ as² leue to be seurerly a *confessour* of a lord or of a *lady *[p. 131 MS.]
A lord's confessor
is as well off as a
bishop.
 as ³to be³ a simple bischop; for bi þis office he takiþ his
 worship & his wynnyng, as if he were pope. and it were
 hard to telle þe harme þat comeþ be many of þise *confessours*, Dangers from
these private
confessors. for þe pope & þe emperour myȝte priuely be poysened bi
 suche fadres, and rewmes myȝten liȝtly be destruyȝed by
 counseilis þat þei ȝyuen to lordis, for no drede þei ben cause
 of mennes synne *confessid* to hem. anentis þe persone þat is
confessid fallen many errours aȝens bileeue, as þat he þat is

¹ of CC.² CC inserts myche.³⁻³ omitted CC.

confessid trowe as bileeue þat al his synne is forȝyuen be-for god, as þe *confessour* telleþ hym. and ȝitt it may falle þat boþe þise shulen ben dāmpned for her folȝ; for ofte þe *confessid* is not *contrite* & turneþ aȝeyne to his synne; and sicke treting¹ ȝyueþ occasioun þat þei boþe ben disceyeud; and þe man þat is *confessed* weneþ þat god doiþ him wrong if he haue euer more peyne for his synne þenne þe prest enioyneþ. and þus synne myȝt be bouȝt for money, as who byȝe an ox or a kowe; and so riche men haden occasioun to drede not for to synne, whenne þei myȝten for a lytle moneye be þus assoyled of alle her synnes; and pore men myȝten dispeire, for þei haden not to byȝe þus synne. Such many errours fallen & fewe men speken aȝeynes hem.

Sin might be bought as you would an ox or a cow.

Cm 6^m MM.

But ȝitt þe feend feyneþ here a lesynge to excuse prestis hise seruauntis; he seiþ þat alle men shulden beleue þat what man þat his prest assoyleþ, what ever penaunce he enioyneþ, he is assoiled be-fore god; and þus popes & prelates kepen to hem silf assoylyng, in which lyþe wynnynge; and þus whoeuer aȝeyne seye þis is pursued as an heretike, & þus by hise olde² wiles he knyttip to-gidre men to helpe popis & cardinales, bischopes & freres to crie þis as bileeue; & freris mouen lordis & ladies to defend þis lawe by strengþe, and bi þis gile þei leden lordis as a man ledip a prisoner; & cristis secte is made pore, & þise foure ben enhaunsed hiȝe; so þat, but if crist helpe his secte, þe foure new wolen brynge *it a-down; and þei foure ben knyttid to-gidre in þis *confessioun* þat her maister haþ tauȝt, as if oon seid to anoþur, “helpe me here, & I shul helpe þee.” a þus a frere þat is a *confessour* to kyng or to a duke is ympe or pere to a bishop, by þe feyning of þis *confessioun*, for þei seien he ledip his soule eeuen to heuen by goddis lawe. and qwenes, duchesses, and oþer ladies han *confessours* of grete name, for as þise ladies ben felowes to lordis, so her *confessours* ben felowis to oþur. and þus þise lordis þat shulden be free, ben oft made þral bi ygnoraunce

The devil tries to keep absolution in the hands of popes and prelates.

The friars hold together,

*[p. 131^b MS.]

to keep up this confession that the devil has taught.

Ladies, too, have confessors of great name.

¹ trettee MM.

² omitted CC.

¹of suche *confessours*¹; for assoylinge of suche *confessours* haþ lytel vertu or non; but assoilyng of god aftur þat a mannes liif is worþi fordoþe synne, & punyseh it til þat it be fully for-zyuen. it is seide comunly, þat coupabilnesse of synne is for-zyuen, and ȝit þat synne dwelliþ to be punyshid, but not for to be dampned in helle. & al þis þing is priuey to god, boþe² to know it & to do it; as an erþly lord ȝyueþ not to his seruauunt power to forȝyue his trespasse, but þat he doiþ in his owne wille, & makeþ his seruauunt to telle it. miche more god of heuen forȝyueþ synne, when he knoweþ man þat he is worþi for sorowe of herte & for treue seruyce þat he doiþ aftur. and þus it is a blasfemy þat *confessours* seyn in þis mater, þat þei forȝyuen synne don aȝens god, & treten peyne aftur her lykyng. Al þis is *propur* to god, but whi shulde he make hem here his felowis? and it shal be shewed aftur, þat þis beleue may not be grounded; but þe feende is about to turne falsehed in-to treuþe, and turne hope in-to bileue, & dedis of hate in-to charite; & þus fredam, þat crist gaf to hise children, he wole turne falsely in-to þraldam. for now it is a lordly þing to have sich a proper *confessor*, and god wot, but þe lord wot not, wher he be a feend of helle; and algatis if he feyne hym power to assoyle more þenne he haþ; for by *sich ypocrisie may he drawe hem boþe to helle, and do harme to þe churche þus more þenne he doþe on þe toþur syde.

It is commonly said that in absolution the guilt is forgiven, but the sin must be punished.

All this is in God's hands, who does not make them his fellows.

It is the fashion to have a private confessor.

*[p. 132 MS.]

And ȝitt it semip þat suche prestis þat heren *confessiouns* oblischen hem folily to here þus confessions; and so non were discrete prest þus shryuyng, as þe popes lawe biddiþ. and ȝitt þe pope biddiþ in his lawe þat *confessours* be discrete, & þei here aloon mennes synnes; but it semeþ vndiscretly spoken, for it were better ioyne two prestis to be witnesse of mannes shrifte. for two witnessis ben bettre þenne oon, & more acordyng to goddis lawe; for boþe in þe oolde lawe, & in þe newe, men tolden commynly her synne; as þat þeeþ

Cm 7^m MM.

Priests that bind themselves to hear confessions are foolish,

but confessors should be discrete.

It would be better for priests to hear confessions in couples.

The old way was to confess publicly.

¹-¹ omitted MM.

² but CC.

tolde in þe crosse to crist hise fordone synne; he shroue hym more medefully, þenne don ¹men now ¹rownyng with prestis, for crist telliþ in þe gospel þat he behyzt hym þat he shulde be wiþ hym in paradise þat same daye; & sich absolucion ȝaue no pope aftur þis lawe. & if þou seist þat no man wolde shriue hym at oonys to many prestis, & so shulde mannes synne be hidde, & many dampned þat now ben saued. Certis siþen

The shame of confession, which is part of penance, would be greater.

þei shulde haue shame to telle her synnes þus to oo prest, & þis shame is þe moost part of penaunce, and makeþ penaunce more ²medeful,³ It semeþ it were more medeful⁴ to shriue togidre to twey prestis. hou oft ȝauen men glorie to god shriuyng to mo men þenne to two; as whenne tweyn prestis seien nyȝe masse, many shryuen hem to boþe to-gidre. And but ȝif þis shrift were medeful, þe churche vsed it wiþ-outen cause. and þus as men hiden here synnes to shriue hem to-gidre to many prestis, so many men hiden here synnes to

Priests do not know how to enjoin penance justly.

shriue hem to oo preest alone. And siþen prestis han not þe craft to enioyne a iust penaunce, it semeþ þat þei ben foolis to take so grete a charge vpon hem; and if a man þat slouȝ a lord shulde be hanged for ⁵his deþe,⁵ more shulde þat leche þat slouȝ a mannes soule be hanged of god for his foly. see we

*[p. 132b MS.]

what penaunce was *sumtyme enioyned to men þat synned greuously, and see we penaunce now enioyned; & þise two a-corde ful lital, and as lawers moten graunt þat þis penaunce writen was goode; so þei moten graunt þat synners lyuen as longe as summe of hem diden, and it were as myche nede to leye now as myche penaunce to summe, as was þenne nede to many of hem; and þus noo prest þat lyueþ now haþ þis craft to leye euen þis penaunce. what wisdom were þenne to maké þis lawe, or prestis to take þis craft on hem? and specially siþ prestis ben bounden on grete peyne to hele þis synne; and hit myzt fellen in many caice þat it were boþe almes & nede to shewe mennes synne þat ben shriuen, but

It might be good to reveal some confessions.

¹⁻¹ omitted CC.

⁴ nedeful CC.

² omitted MM.

⁵ þis dede MM.

³ nedeful CC.

whi shulden prestis ben punyshed herfore? Men han¹ writen in latyn many resouns ageyne þis shrift.

Men dreden here to seie þe treuþe, but summen þenken þat Cm 8m MM. it standes in þis; þat *confession* made to god, wiþ worþi penaunce ioyned þerwiþ, is better þan þis² *confessioun* made to any prest or pope. but I wot þat þise newe *confessiouns* Confession has done much good and much harm. han don myche good in þe churche, & þerwiþ myche harme; and god woot wheþer was more of hem. and it is certeyne þat þis newe shrifte be-gan by ordynaunce of þe pope, for no man can telle ellis hou & whenne þis shrifte beganne, and þis witnessiþ her propur doctour of þe popes lawe opynly; and so it semeþ to many men þat þis lawe shuld not be holden as It should not be obligatory. goddis lawe ne euer more, but in þat tyme whenne reson of god shulde moue mennes *consciens* þat þis *confessioun* wold don hem good. and if any man aske more, he axiþ more þenne god wole axe, for god ordeyneþ neuwer a lawe ne men to perfourme it but if þis lawe were grounded in resoun, and men shulden perfourme it wiþ wille; for ellis it were noo meede³ to do it, but if it were wilful sumtyme; and þus þis *lawers han nede to grounde þis lawe vpon reson, & to teche *[p. 134 MS.] Lawyers should show ground in reason for the law. wheche ben able prestis to here þus mennes *confessioun*; for ellis shuld no man bi resoun telle þus his schrift to any prest. and þus men of *conscience* wolen not telle here þus her synne to prestis; for þei seyne þat no prest is able, but Men of conscience say that no priest, but only Christ, is able to hear confessions thus. oonly crist, to here þus shriftes; and if eny diffame hem or pursue hem by þis lawe, þei baden shewe hem an able prest to here þus synnes of hem, and þei wolen bleþely shryue hem þus, and ellis not, as þis lawe techiþ. but what prest þat it be, þat is synful & couetouse, & proferiþ him þus to here mennes schrifte, shewiþ himself vnable þerby? for if he had not couetise of worldly goodis & subiectioun of folk, he shuld If priests did not covet wealth and authority, they would rather preach. preche to þe puple, & leue al sicke rownyng þat is ungrundid; for sich preching by cristis lawe made many men to leue her synne, but I rede not in goddis lawe þat þis rownyng made euer man iust; and if it dide, it was becase,

¹ MM inserts seen.² any CC.³ nede CC.

as a wronge may sumtyme make riȝt; and algatis synful men þat han prestis suspect of couetyse & of vnkunnyng in þis craft shuld kepe þis shrift fro sech prestis. but begynne we at þe pope, & aske him of dedly synne, & hou men shulden know *contricion*, & whi siche penaunce shal be enioyned; and it semeþ to many men þat alle þe popes & þere clerkis kunnen not telle on of þise þre; and þerfore þei wolen shryue hem to god. *general* schrifte & opyn to man wole þei make, & þat is I-now, so þat it come of *contricion* & treue penaunce þat men speken of.

Ask the Pope what is deadly sin; what are the proofs of contricion; what is the rule for enjoining penance? He and all his clerks cannot tell you. General confession is enough.

Cm 9m MM.

For it were not to ȝyue occasion to horde synne & to holde it, þerfor men shulden by goddis lawe moue men to forsake synne, and þus shulden prestis do be *prechyng*; but *antecrist* haþ suspendid hit now. man shuld have sorowe of his synne, for gretnesse of þe kynd lord, & harm of leeing of his grace, & for oblishyng to grete peyne. No man synneþ as we speken here but if he synne *aȝen god, for who euer synneþ not aȝens hym, be his trespas neuer so myche punyshed here, he may not be dampned in helle þerfore, and ellis it were no synne of man. & þus men punyshen ofte men here in *mennes* courte ful greuously for dedis þat men callen trespasses, & ȝitt god is not wroþe for¹ hem; but it may falle oft þat men erren, & punyshen not þe trespasses of god, ne for þat it is don aȝens god, but for *mennes* wyunnyng; or for þat it misse-likiþ hem. and þenke we hou a man wole meke him to a worldly lord for trespasse don to hym; & bi oure feiþ god is more lord wiþouten mesure þenne any erþly kyng; herfore we shulden be meke to god for trespasses þat we han don to hym, and specialy for his kyndenesse þat he made vs first of nouȝt, & siþen bouȝt vs fro þe fendes prisoun, & giueþ vs aye grace in alle oure goodis; and he is redy to ȝyue vs blisse, if we seruen him *perfiztly*. and þus boþe þe gretnesse of þis lord & his kyndenesse shuld meue us to sorow for oure synnes. a man haþ a myche forþinkyng for leesyng of loue & of an erþely lorde; what witt or treuþe is in þat man

Antichrist has stopped preaching.

*[p. 134b MS.]

All sin is against God.

Men are often punished for deeds that do not offend God.

Sins against God are not punished, or only because they offend men.

We should humble ourselves for our sins.

God's greatness and kindness should both move us to sorrow.

þat soroweþ not for losse of goddis *grace*? we han sorowe for losse of two goodis, of worldly goodis, & goodis of kynde; and ȝitt we sorowen to lytil for lesyng of goodis of *grace*; & ȝitt þei ben þe moost goodis of þise þre goodis þat a man haþe. and siþen beleue techiþ vs þat men þat breken goddis hestis, & maken not a-seeþe þerfore, moten nedis be dampned in helle, Drede of þis grete peyny shuld moue men to sorowe for synne.

& þus ambrose & gregory seyne þat þenne a man haþ fully sorowe, whenne hym displesiþ fordon synne, & not eft wil synne ageyne; an þus is þat man contrite of synne, þat he

Ambrose and Gregory.
What true repentance is.

vngodeli to god haþ don, þat he haþ perfit wille to leue it, and for no þing wil synne aȝeyne. þise men þat han *a litil displesyng & ben ful nyȝ to synne aȝeyne han no penaunce of her synne, be þei neuer so oft I-shriuen; and þus þe shrift þat is þus made makeþ men hardy to synne aȝeyne, for *contricioun* mut be groundid in sad loue of ihesu crist, so þat *contricioun* seye sad sorowe for synne þat is don, and sadde loue to synne not aȝeyne, as myche or more as was likyng to synne. and

*[p. 135 MS.]
Without sorrow for sin shrift is useless.

þis kunne not we knowe ful *certeyne*, but han glymeryng & supposyng, & þus we moten lyue here in beleue & in hope to crist, þat riȝt entent & goode werkis grounde vs in hope, þat crist wole saue vs. and he þat trustiþ to popis bulles or assoylinge fro peyne & synne, or oþur wordis of *confessours*, þat þei feynen¹ bisyde goddis lawe, is folily disceyued in hise

We cannot know that we are truly contrite, but must hope so.

bileue & in hope, & þus he dispeyreþ; but we shulden beleue þat *grace* of god is so gret & plentyuouse, þat if a man synne neuer so miche ne so longe in his lyue, if he wole aske of god *mercy* & be *contrite* for his synne, god wole forȝyue him his synne wiþouten siche iapes feyned of prestis. but be men

No trust to be placed in the Pope's bulls,

but in the greatness of God's grace.

war of þis perile, þat *continuaunce* of mannes synne wiþouten sorowe & displesaunce wole make his synne harde, & bereue him power to sorowe þerfore, & to gete mercy, and þus men shulden euer drede synne, & flee to knytt on to a-noþer; for whenne a man synkis in þe myre, at þe laste he may not helpe hym self.

Use hardens sin.

¹ eynen CC.

Cm 10^m MM. It were to witt to assoyle skils þat antecrist makip aȝens

Antichrist urges
that heretics will
destroy the sacra-
ments.

Psalm lxxi. 22.

The sacrament of
confession like a
harp.

*[p. 135b MS.]

Such figurative
interpretations
good when well
taken,
but this is not to
the point.

The courtesy of
God does not ask
all men to make
audible confes-
sion.

A man may re-
pent silently as he
may sin silently.

þis waye. ffurst he seiþ þat heretikes wolun destruyȝe þe
seuen sacramentis; for þat stondiþ in *confessioun* of mouþ,
& sorow of hert, & a-seet makynȝ, and herfor seiþ david in
his boke: “þou god þat art my god, I shal synge to þe in
an harpe.” an harpe haȝe þre partis of hym; þe ouermost
in which ben stringis wrastid, þe secounde is þe holow part
of þe harpe, þe þridde knytted þise two to-gidre. Riȝt so in¹ þis
sacrament mut be *contricioun* for þe furst part, & aftur a
man mut *synge to god in voice for þe secound part, and þe
þridde tyme he must make a-seep & knytt þise two partes
to-gidre. what herityke or fool is he þat wold destruyȝe þis
gostly harpe? here men seyen þat trewe entent shuld be to
declare riȝt beleue, hou men shulden harpe here to god, as
david did & oþer seyntis; for many kunne not² wrast þis harpe,
& oþur kunne not harpe whenne it is diȝt. Suche wittis
gyuen to goddis worde ben goode whenne þei ben wele
taken; and þis witt þat here is seid telliþ þat a man shulde
shriue hym to god, & makip no mynde of rownynge shrift,
þat is late brouȝt inne bi þe pope. and iche man þat holdiþ
beleue grantet þat a man shuld shriue him to god, ȝe, & to
man, bi voice of mouþe, and haue sorow for his synne,
& þerfor make to god a-seep for synne; but þis is³ don apertly
to prestis, when þei ben good & louen more þe heele of
mennes soules þenne her goodis by coueytise. but here men
shulden vnderstonde þat þe curtesie of god askiþ not of iche
man to shriue him þus by voice of mouþe; for as many
synnen greuously wiþ-inne in herte, as did þe fend, so many
men maken aseep bi sorow of herte, þat may not speke or
wantet oportuntee to shryue hym to man bi voice; and riȝt
so as a man may synne, so he may here make aseep; for
god is as redy to ȝyue mercy as he is redy to take veniaunce.
triste wele to god & holde his lawe, & þenne þou shriuest þe
wele to him; & synge to him wiþ ten stringis, þat ben
kepinge of þe ten hestis; and sorowe of trespasse aȝeyns hem

¹ omitted CC.

² omitted CC.

³ omitted CC.

ten shal wraste þis harpe to a-corde welle. and many men failen in þis wrastyng & in goostly syngyng aftur; and so þis priuey sorowe of herte is no sacrament of þe churche, ne priuey rownyng late brouȝt inne, for sacramentis ben open & knowen. but whenne a man wiþ contrite herte shriueþ him opynly to god or man, þenne his voice, þat is token of his hooly sorowe of herte, may be cal*led a sacrament, as men knowen þat descriuen it. & þus we largen in sacramentis, for iche good sensible dede þat we don, or þat springiþ of mannes charite, may be callid a sacrament; and þus þre reisyngis of dede bodies þat crist dide, as þe gospel telliþ, may be called þre sacramentis, for þre turnyngis of man to god. Summe men turnen to god wiþ-inne, & summe aftur þat þei han synned wiþ-outward, and summe fro¹ þat þei han¹ synned in custom; and þus þe rysyng of þe² lasar was a grete sacrament, as men reden in þe churche. and antecrist may bigyle foolis bi sich lewde resouns as he makith, but goddis lawe telliþ wele þe falshed of suche resouns.

Secret confession is no sacrament;

sacraments are open and known.

*[p. 136 MS.]

In another sense all good deeds ar sacraments.

And ȝitt gruccheþ antecrist, and seiþ þat crist telliþ in þe gospel how crist specified to petre to ȝyue hym þe keyes of heuen; and so petre mut haue a viker þat shuld specialy bere þe keyes, and þise keyes shulden opyn & bynde to for-ȝyue synnes, and opyn men heuen, & to curse oþur men þat don aȝen goddis lawe.

Keys of heaven given to Peter, and so to his vicar.

Here we seyne be goddis techyng þat mich error is in þis poynt. Summe ben so nyȝ beestis, þat þei vnderston den bodily keyes, by whiche heuen ȝates shulden be openid and stokune,³ & petur is porter in þis office. þe secounde error in þis poynt is more perelouse in þe churche, for pharisees alargen her browes & gogelen fer⁴ fro goddis lawe; þei seyn þat þise keyes ben goostly wittis & power, ȝyuen to hem to bynde & assoile men aftur þe witt appropriid to hem; and herby⁵ þe fend feyneþ oft bi his viker antecrist many errors in þe churche, & doþe myche harme to foolis.

Some men fools enough to fancy material keys and Peter a porter.

Pharisees say the keys are a spiritual power to bind and loose.

The þride weye of bileue seiþ þat þer ben many keyes;

¹-¹ þat þat CC. ² omitted MM. ³ sperid MM. ⁴ foule MM. ⁵ herfor CC.

The keys are
knowledge and
power,

*[p. 136b MS.]
given to Peter,
afterwards to the
apostles.

Without Peter's
knowledge and
good life, the
Pope is porter
of hell gates.

The knowledge
must be of God's
law.

The power does
not consist in
absolution,

but in teaching,
preaching and re-
proving.

siþ crist, þat may not synne, calleþ boþe þe keyes of heuenes
& þe ȝates of helle; and no doute to grete witt þe keyes of
heuen ben vndurstonden witt & power, þat prestis han to
telle men þe wille of god, & to wurche aftur þis witt; and so
god ȝaue to petre þes two keies for him & hise; and af**turward*
god ȝaue to þe apostles þes two keyȝes for hem & hers. and
þus antecrist auȝte to shame to chalenge oonly petres keyȝes,
but he had passyngly witt & lijf aftur petur; for if he
reuerse him in þise two, he is porter of helle ȝates. and þis
witt þat crist spekiþ of stondeþ not in mannes lawe, ne in
oþur curiouse lawes, as matematik,¹ or lawes of kynde, but it
stondeþ in goddis lawe to holde men in mesur þerof, & to
teche cristen men hou þei shulden lyue to god & man, &
come to heuen. and I dar not seie for drede of god, þat þis
power stondeþ in assoilyng & cursyng as men practisen to-
daye; for petre forfendid to *curse*, & vsed not þis assoilynge;
but by autorite of god to *preche* & to teche cristis weie, & to
repreue wickud men boþe in word & in dede; þat semeþ to be
þe power þat god ȝaue petur & his felowes. and it semeþ to
many men þat if a prest presume for pride þat he haþ
passyngly þis power, in þat he² shewiþ þat he wantiþ it; but it
semeþ þat iche prest þat telliþ trewly þe lawe³ of god haþ þis
power, more or lesse, aftur þat god wole ȝyue him, & mennes
rules or mennes chesing⁴ ben not gospel in þis poynt, ne any
beleue þat þei ben soþe, if þe gospel grounde hem not; and
þerfore kepe wele goddis⁵ lawe, & lyue þou in bileue of crist.
and þus sumwhat bi þise wordis may antecristis resoun be
asoyled. But we sufficien not to shewe now þe errours þat
ben grounded in þis mater.

Cm 12^m MM.

Christ sent the
ten lepers to the
priest, an argu-
ment for shrift.

Austyn.

But ȝitt argueþ antecrist þat þis sentence is heresie, for
crist bad ten leprouse men go & shewe hem to þe prestis; and
bi þis he tauȝt opynly þat it nedīþ to be shriuen at prestis,
and to þis crist gaue prestis power, but wherto but to
assoyle? Here men seyne aftur austyn, þat no witt of holi

¹ makamete CC.

² omitted CC.

³ wille MM.

⁴ clensyng CC.

⁵ cristis MM.

writt, but if [it] be literal witt, proueh ouȝt by autorite of it; but þe literal witt is þis: crist bad ten leprouse men go & shewe hem to prestis, as it was boden in þe *olde lawe, but þise prestis in þe oolde lawe assoileden not rownyngly, as we don now, but bi signes of goddis lawe þei sheweden wheche men weren leprouse, & which weren not leprouse, and to her iugement shulden men stonde. but crist tauȝt in þis gospel þat he cam not to destruȝe þe lawe, but to fulfille it, as he telliþ be-fore bi mathewe; and to þis entente crist bad þe mesels go and shewe hem to prestis. and þus freris myȝten telle þe puple þat holy writt haþ mystily¹ þis witt what euer þei wolen seye; and þus men tellen þat freris tellen þat what treuþe þat þei seyne, if it be noteful to þe puple, þenne þat treuþe is þe gospel; and þus alle synnes þat þe freris don, or any treuþe þat [þei] may teche men is þe gospel of crist. but god forbede þat it were so; for no drede þise mennes defaultis ben soþe, & it is profitable þat þei ben knowen to þe puple, lest þat þei disceyue hem. þus men vndurstonden not þe gospelle of ihesu crist but þei taken þe lettir þer-off, & aftur vndurstonden it vp þe grammer, and seyntes han tauȝt þat² þat furst witt is þe gospel. and gyue we to aduersaries here þat men shulden goo & shewe hem to prestis, for so men diden bifore tyme boþe in þe oolde lawe & in þe newe, but hou shulde men take of þis to rounne wiþ³ prestis & þus to be assoiled? and marke we wele þis gospels witt, & it semeþ opyn þerby þat þise ten cammen not to þe prestis; for crist he-ledde hem by þe weye, and so þis gospel techiþ vs hou crist him self clensiþ of synne; & to him is þis thanke propur, & neyþur to pope ne confessour; for crist takeþ a-wei þe synne, & þei not, but disceyuen men; & þus men shulden be aliens, as was þis samaritan, and turne aȝen & þanke crist, & not gyue money to þise prestis; for crist wole assoyle men wele, al if þei gon not þus to rome. for crist bi his godhed is in iche place of þe worlde, and bi þat he takeþ away

Scriptural proof must rest on the literal meaning.

*[p. 137 MS.]

The lepers showed themselves to the priest as the judge of leprosy appointed by the old law.

Matt. v. 17.

Friars might thus make what they pleased out of Scripture.

Men cannot understand the gospel unless they take it literally.

Grant that men were to show themselves to the priest, it was not thus whisperingly.

The ten came not to be healed of the priest, for Christ healed them by the way. Then it is Christ that cleanseth from sin.

Men should thank Christ, and not give money to priests.

¹ iustly CC.

² & CC.

³ wist CC.

Men need not
make pilgrimages
to Rome.

Cm 13^m MM.
*[p. 137^b MS.]
Antichrist's
arguments.
James v. 16.
Christ's order to
his disciples to
loose Lazarus,
teaches that
priests should
absolve.
Men confessed at
John's baptism.

synne whenne he makith men able þer-to; & pilgrimage wiþ
siche offrynge vnabliþ men oft to be assoyled of god.

*But ȝitt argueþ antecrist þat Iames biddiþ men shriue
her synnes; and no drede god biddiþ bi Iames þat iche
synful man do so; & þat prestis shuld assoyle men techiþ
crist in þe risynge of lazar, for crist bad to hise apostlis þat
þei shulden vnknytt his bondis. and þus men shriuen in
cristis tyme, whenne Ion baptist washed hem. why shuld
not ȝitt men do so, bi þe fourme of holy churchē?

Answer.

Here men seyne þat it were good to holde þe fourme of
hooly churchē, as men diden before þat tyme þat þe fend was
vnbounde & þis lawe made. for þenne crist assoiled þicker
men þenne he dide aftur þe tyme of þis lawe. and to þe first
autorite þat is aleggid of Iames epistle; men shulden merke
hou Iames biddiþ þat men shulden shriue iche to oþur þe
synnes þat þei fellen inne, & þus þei shulden knowleche
mekeli þe freelte þat þei weren inne, and not oon feyne as an
ypocrite þat he were more hooly before a-noþur, & had vertu
to forȝyue synne. & þis worde þat Iames spekiþ makith not
for þe emperour prelatis; for bi þis word þat Iames spekiþ
iche man shulde shriue him to his broþur, and knowleche
mekely þe freelte þat he is inne. siþ crist seiþ þat iche
man þat hiȝeþ himsilf shal be lowid, hou shuld not þise
emperour prelatis be lowid bi þe sentence of crist, siþ þei
hiȝen hemsilf wiþ-oute skil of þing þat is appropriid to crist?
and þus þise emperour prelatis synnen aȝen þis worde þat
Iames biddiþ. And as a-nentis þe secound worde þat crist

The case of
Lazarus shows
that Christ re-
serves to himself
the giving of
spiritual life,

bad to hise apostlis whenne he had quickenen lazar, he brouȝt
him out of his sepulchre al knyttid in hise bondis, & bad hem
to vnbynde him. þis mysty witt of þise dedis telliþ vnto
true men þat crist appropriþ to himsilf to qwiken dede men
gostly, & to make hem stonde in grace. but ȝitt crist leueþ
bondis of synnes, þat ben yuel costoms to falle in synnes, and

but leaves men
still bound in evil
habits,

*[p. 138 MS.]
which priests
should unloose
by good preach-
ing.

crist *biddiþ apostlis & prestis to vnknytt þise bondis bi
trewe preching. but þis office is dispised¹ & cristes owne

¹ suspended MM.

office is misse-taken; for now prestis prechen not to þise men þat ben conuertid bi grace of crist, but þei seyn þei fordon synne and þat is more þenne any prechyng, and þus þei gon bifore crist, & leuen þe maundement þat he biddiþ, and antecrist can-not dispreue þis witt bi resoun ne godis lawe.

And as a-nentis þe þridde worde, þat men þat weren baptized of Ione confesseden here synnes, & so shulde we; I graunt þis word þat is seid, but þe gospel seiþ neþir þat þei shrouen her synnes to Ion, ne bi þis rounyng to prestis. but it is lickly þat ychone of hem shryuen mekely his synne to oþur, and so her baptym was medeful.¹ & so what man shryueþ him mekely to god or to man, no drede god forþyueþ him his synne, & ȝyueþ him grace; but þis falleþ not euer more whenne a man shriueþ him to þe emperour clerk; ȝe, if he shriue him to þe pope. & þus alle autorites þat ben founden in goddis lawe, þat ²techen þat² men shulden shriue hem, ben to graunt to þis witt; þat men shulden shriue hem to god, and in case to her broþur, whenne it profitiþ to hem. but antecrist shulde shame here þat if men shulden þus shriue hem, þenne þei shulden telle þe emperour clerkis in her eeris alle her synnes, & do what þei bidden hem do, for ellis god wole not assoile hem. if þou be a prest of cristis secte, holde þe payde of his lawe to teche his puple cristis gospel, al if þou feyne þee no³ more power; for crist haþ ȝyue power I-nowe to his prestis to teche his church; & enioyned hem sicke office þat ȝyueþ hem not occasioun to synne. & þus power þat prestis han standeþ not in transubstansinge of þe oste, ne in makyng of accidentis for to stonde bi hemsilf; for þis power graunted not god to crist ne to any apostle, and so crist haþ speciali power to do away mennes synne; & þise miracles þat ben feyned þat no man may see ne knowe, as þei waxen⁴ without profit, so þei han no grounde in god.

The confession at John's baptism is not said to have been made privily to John.

All scripture teaches to confess to God, and to man if it be profitable.

Christ has given power to his priests to teach,

but this power does not lie in transubstantiating the Host, or making accidents stand of themselves (i.e. exist apart from substance).

These miracles that cannot be seen or tested are profitless and groundless.

Explicit tractatus ⁵de confessione & penitencia.⁵

¹ nedeful CC.

²⁻² omitted CC.

³ omitted CC.

⁴ weren MM.

⁵⁻⁵ only in MM.

XXIV.

OF FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.

MR. ARNOLD thought this tract not improbably the work of Wyclif, but did not print it, because he “found it to be a remarkably dull composition and to contain not a single new idea.” He may not be alone in this severe judgment; but after several fiercely polemical tracts, it is almost a relief to come upon a specimen of Wyclif’s simple evangelical teaching. Even here his foes are not forgotten, and his attack on the friars, and on their teaching as to the Eucharist, marks the tract as a late one. I have very little doubt that it is authentic.

There is a curious reference in Chapter IV. to Antinomian opinions, which we should not have expected to be prevalent among Wyclif’s hearers.

Copied from the MS. at New College, Oxford (Q), and collated with the Dublin MS. CC.

SUMMARY.

CHAP. I.	Men must learn about Faith, Hope and Charity	p. 347
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	These are enough to bring a man to heaven	355

*Sicut enim corpus sine spiritu moritur ita opera sine *[p. 124 MS.]
fide. iacobi 3°. fides sine operibus mortua est.¹

[*Capitulum primum.*]

For it is seide in holdynge of oure haly-day þat we schulde
ocupie þe tyme in *prechyng*² and *preiynge*² and deuoute
herynge of þe lawe of god, and ouer þis³ many freris, as
bastardis to goddis lawe, tellen iapes or lesyngis & leeuē þe
gospel; herfore schulden men lerne of þre good⁴ vertues, þat
þe gospel of poule clepiþ feiþ, hope, & charite. ffeiþ is þe
ground of alle oþer vertues; & þerfore poule clepiþ it schelde
of alle⁵ cristen men. ffor amonge sixe armures noon is more
nedeful. but feiþ may be taken on manye maneres. ¶ Sum
tyme feiþ is clepid þe truthe þat men⁶ trowen, & so þer is
a comune feiþ to alle cristen men. ¶ Sum tyme feiþ is
clepid *vertu* þat maken⁷ trewe men, & so eche trewe man
haþ diuerse feiþ. and sum tyme feiþ is clepid oure
trowynge in werkys. and by þes þre membris may⁸ þou
knowe goddis lawe þat spekiþ of feiþ on⁹ diuerse maneres.
seynt poule clepiþ feiþ ground of goostly þingis þat men
schulden hope to haue in heuen; and here men¹⁰ seen hem
not, but trowen bi word of god, if þei¹⁰ seruen him treuly, to
haue hem in heuen. and so specialye by feiþ ben men made
trewe *to god; and whos[o] fayliþ in feiþ he is fals to god, *[p. 124b MS.]
& tristiþ not to hijs treuthe, as heþen men don not. and
herfore seith seynt poule þat cristen mennus feiþ is mene of
alle here gode werkis¹¹ þat þei here don. ffor seyntis by
feiþ discoumfiteden rewmes, 3he þe rewmes of þe fende; & [Heb. xi. 33.]
þat is more maistri þan wyn rewmes of men, for enemyes ben
moo & more koynte¹² in þer dedis bi wylis of here capteyns.

Paul's gospel tells
of three virtues,
faith, hope and
charity.
Faith is ground of
all other virtues.

Different mean-
ings of the word
'faith.'

¹ no text in CC. ²⁻² omitted CC. ³ omitted CC. ⁴ goddis CC.
⁵ omitted CC. ⁶ we CC. ⁷ makith CC. ⁸ maist CC. ⁹ in CC.
¹⁰⁻¹⁰ omitted CC. ¹¹ werlkis Q, vertues CC. ¹² queynt CC.

God cannot be served without faith.

You would take off your hat to a gracious letter from the king.

The commandments are a letter sent by God through Moses.

¹ & þus seyntis han wrouȝt faire & iust dedis,¹ for noman may laste in harde lif for god but if he haue feiþ, bi whiche he lastiþ so; ne noman may *serue* blis of god but if he haue feiþ, bi whiche he seruiþ it; and schortly noman synniþ aȝenus god but if² he fayle in feiþ, þat groundiþ goddis werkis. ¶ as if þou haddist a lettre þat þi kynge sent þee seelid wiþ hijs priuey seele, & worschipid þee myche & hiȝt þee greet eritage to be at³ hijs retenu & serue hym treuly, þou woldest don of þin hoode and kisse hijs seel for hope of rewarde. god is miche more þan any lord of erthe; he sent a lettre to man by moyses hijs messangere, þat is more worþ þan any pope or cardynal. hijs lettre is hijs mawndementis, & *grace* in moyses soule is hijs priue seel, better þen eny kyngis signe. ¶ hijs seruice is liȝt & hijs eritage is myche, for it is þe blis of heuen lastynge ⁴wiþ-uten ende,⁴ and here-of schulden men not fayle wiþ-uten greet forfeiture. take⁵ hed to mennus feiþ how bisily þei traueylen for godes & worschip of þe worlde, & leue traueyle to god, & þou mayst wel see þat feiþ feiliþ hem.

Capitulum 2^m.

Faith may fail in three ways.
1. By default.

2. It may be too thin, so that it cannot resist the darts of the enemy.

1°. **B**ut in þre maneres may mennus feiþ fayle. Sum faylen in feiþ for defaute of it; as⁶ men þat trowen not to god þat he wil reward hem of þe blis of heuen for her trewe seruice. 2°. ¶ sum men faylen in feiþ, for it is so þynne, & ⁷eke liȝt⁷ to perische wiþ dart by sauȝt of þin enemye; as men þat ben assaylid by her flesche or by þe world, or in lustis or in peynes ȝyuen it vp to⁸ sone, for lital trist þat þei han in mede of her lord. and herfore crist often tymes reprouyde hys apostlis for litalnesse of her feiþ, whan þei fayleden to trist on hym. 3°. ¶ and sum⁹ faylen in

¹⁻¹ omitted Q.

⁴⁻⁴ for euere CC.

⁷⁻⁷ eep CC.

² omitted Q.

⁵ Q. inserts we.

⁸ omitted Q.

³ omitted Q.

⁶ of KK.

⁹ summen CC.

here feiþ þat han her scheld holid,¹ & by spere of here enemye þei ben often kylde; & ben suche men þat trowen many trowþes, & in sum *þei faylen as men out of here feiþ; for as he þat byndiþ hym to kepe goddis hestis mut kepe hem alle, as seynt Iames seiþ, so he þat byndiþ him to feiþ of hijs god, mut kepe it al hoole stifly & in ordre. ffor if þi schelde were at þi backe, þou myȝtist sone be kilde. for þe fendes of helle trowen alle þat we trowen, but hem failen charite to bynde her schelde in ordre, & herfore ben þei dampned by² her defourmed scheeld. ¶ & herfore schulden we trowe alle þe lawe of god, & trowe þat it is trewe by euery part of it;³ for if þou trowe myche of it, & trowist þat sum is fals, by þis hoole of þi schelde art þou deed to god; ¶ as freris þat trowen many articlis of þe⁴ treuthe & faylen in þe treuþe of þe sacrid hoost, schal be dampnyd herfore But if þei turne aȝen & trowe in wordes of crist, þat seiþ: “þis is my bodye.” but nowe freris trowen noþer þat þis oost is brede ne þe⁵ bodye of crist, ne neþer of þis may be; but crist seiþ surely:⁶ “þis breed is my bodye.” but hou ar þei not heretikis þat trowen aȝen crist here? ¶ and þus eueryche man haþ a maner of feiþ, syn eche man trowiþ þat god &⁷ alle þingis ben, but hijs feiþ is rente in particuler erroures þat trowiþ fals of þe feiþ, by any part of it. and so oure good god byndiþ vs not to euermore trowen & specyaly eche article of þe treuþe, for sum ben so sutil þat first in blis of heuen seyntis schulen knowe hem þat now g[e]neraly trowen hem. for if þou trowist in þi god, þat trowþe wil suffice þee; but noman trowiþ in god but he þat loueþ him & hopeþ by his good lif to haue⁸ þe blis of heuen.⁸

3. The shield may have holes in it, i.e. faith may be imperfect in some points.

*[p. 125 MS.]

[James ii. 10.]

The devils believe but have not charity.

We must believe all the law of God.

Friars fail in belief as to the Host,

which they believe to be neither bread nor Christ's body.

General belief enough. Some articles so subtle that we shall know them first in heaven.

[Capitulum 3^m.]

HOpe is þe secounde vertu þat god himself axiþ, & is ful diuerse fro feiþ þat we han spokun of. ffor feiþ is of þingus þat was & ben & schul be, but hope is al only of þinges þat

Difference between Hope and Faith.

¹ holde Q.

² for CC.

³ per-of CC.

⁴ omitted Q.

⁵ omitted CC.

⁶ soþli CC.

⁷ in Q.

⁸⁻⁸ blisse of god CC.

ben to come. as we trowen þat god made þe world of nouȝt, & we trowen þat crist is now bodily in heuen, & schal euermore be after þe ¹day of ¹dom. ¶ also feiþ is boþe of gode þing & euył, boþe of him þat haþ feiþ & of oþer creaturis, but hope is al only of hym þat haþ hope and only of good þinge in þe blis of heuen. as we trowen þat many men schul *be dampned in helle, & þat many oþur schul be saued in heuen; but noþur we hopen þis dampnacion ne þis saluacion, for we hopen al only þat towchiþ oure owne blis. and so trowthe of cristen men puttiþ hem owte of dowte, & makiþ hem so surely trowe ² here bileue, þat þei schulden stonde for þis treuþe, to deef of here bodye.

¶ but so it is not of hope. if we looken wel, as neþer we witen ne we trowe now to be sauȝd, & ȝhit we hopen it wiþ-uten ony dowte. and so hope is werke of soule bi-neþe oure bileue, & so by-nethe knowynge but a-bouen doutinge. and so hope of erþely þinge is not vertu of hope, but comunely it smacchiþ synne, for it lettiþ hope of heuen. and so it is all diuerse to hope and to trowe; but þis is a sutil mater to clerkis for to knowe, but comune ³ sentence here-of ³ sufficiþ to oþure men.

*[p. 125b MS.]

Nota bene.

Hope is less than belief or knowledge, but above doubt.

Capitulum 4^m.

[B]vt siþ ⁴ philosopheres seyn þat contraries han oon lore, feiþ and hope techen vs to knowe contraries of hem. ffeiþ haþ in fidelite contrarie to him, and hope haþ desperacion as his contrarie. and as feiþ is ground of alle oþur vertues, so in-fidelite is ground of alle oþur synnes. ¶ and herfor seiþ crist þat god schal reprove þe worlde first of þis synne, for it groundiþ alle oþere. ⁵wan-hope of men is a greet synne, for noman is dampned wiþ-uten þis wanhope. for he þat lastiþ in þis ⁷ synne to his lyues ende, and haþe no sorowe

[John xvi. 8.]

¹⁻¹ omitted CC.⁴ omitted CC.² thorowe Q.⁵ Q inserts for.³⁻³ speche CC.⁶ hys Q.

of hijs synne ne hope to haue forȝyu[n]es, he synneþ aȝen þe holy goost; þat neuer schal be forȝifen him, noþer in þis worlde ne in þe toþur, as crist him silf seiþ. and many þer ben þat synnen in þis synne longe bifore þei dien. ¶ but þanne it lastiþ euere, as eche man þat god knowiþ to be dampned in helle, beriþ euere-lastinge synne aȝen þe holy gost; for as þe holy gost is þe laste persone of god, after whom comeþ noon oþur, so it is of þis synne. ffor no *man may synne after þis last¹ synne. ¶ and so by two weyes fallen men in despeyre. 1°. Sum for þei trowen not in þe mercy of god; & þes ben cayms childire & seyn her synne is more þan her dissert is to serue blis or ellis goddis mercy. 2°. and sum synnen in dispeyre aȝenus riȝtwisnes² of god; as þes þat seyn in her lif: “late me synne ynowe, for god wole neuere lese þat he haþ³ dere bouȝt.” and so alle þat schul ben dampned ben euere more in synnyng aȝen þe holy gost, & euere in despeyringe. ¶ as if a man drof continually in-to þe erþe a stake, til he were in dispeire þat he myȝt drawe it vp. þe stake is þe synne hardud in mannus hert; þe malle þat he driueþ it wiþ is newe rehersynge of synne; and suche at þe ende of her lif lacken power & grace to trist in helpe of þer god and hope to be sauȝd.

Despair is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

[Matt. xii. 31.]

*[p. 126 MS]

Despair may come from—

1. Not believing in God's mercy.

2. Not believing in God's will to punish sin.

[*Capitulum 5^m.*]

[p]E þridde vertu of god is loue or⁴ charite, and it haþ two braunchis, as loue of god & loue of man. & beste mene to kepe þis loue were man forto lerne & loue forto kepe two tables of goddis lawes,⁵ for bi þes & ellis not kepiþ man him in charite. and þis vertu cloþis man at domus-day wiþ bride-cloþis, & þis cloþe may neuere be lost in þis world ne in þe toþure. ffor noman may come to heuene but he haue þis cloþinge, ne no man may haue þis clothe, but if he come to heuen; & so men þat schulen be dampned han but

Love is twofold : of God and man.

This virtue clothes man in the wedding garment, without which he cannot enter heaven.

¹ omitted Q. ² riȝtfulnesse CC. ³ omitted Q. ⁴ & Q. ⁵ hestis CC.

Friars love their habit more than the garment of charity.

*[p. 126b MS.]

We should love the friars' persons, but hate their sins.

Men reverse these three virtues:

Faith in the matter of the Host,

Hope in begging,

feyned charite. But lyue wele after goddis lawe & hope to haue þis¹ loue, for no man schal knowe ne trowe to haue it but if god wole telle him priueyly. ¶ and so freris, þat louen more her habite þat þei han ordeyned hem þan þe cloþe of charite þat god haþ schapen his sones, ben yuel disposid to haue þis² cloþe of charite; Siþ þer loue is turned amys to charge more here habite, to lesyn it or leeuē it, to cloþe þer-wiþ þer bodye, þan to lese þis charite to cloþe þer-wiþ þer soule; for often þei lese charite in presens of man, but if þei losten þis habite þus, as þei falsly feynen, þei were opyn apostates and losten þe luf of god, for as þei feynen falsly god *loueþ more þis cloþinge þan cloþinge of þer soule wiþ þis cloþe of charite; and þis is open heresie by many kyn skylles. but here men douten comunly where men schuld loue þes heretikys, but it is no drede þat ne men schulde loue þer kynde & hate þe same kynde in þat þat þei ben so yuel, and so þe persones bi hem-silf schulden be loued in charite, & here synnes by hemsilf schulden men hate for goddis loue.³ ffor he is not frend to crist þat loueþ þus hijs enemye; and þus he is frend to þe frere þat hatih þus his synne & worchih to distrie it & purge him þer-fro. ¶ and þis moueþ manye men to speke of þre heresies þat many freres be smyttid inne, & contrarien þes þre⁴ vertues. ffor who myȝt more contrarie feih þan sey þat crist seiþ fals whan he seiþ þat “þis brede is myn owne bodye,” for þis may neþer be⁵ brede ne þe bodi of crist, but it is accident or nouȝt, as freres feynen falsly. & þus þei chesen hem a place to falsen crist in hijs visage, and ierom wiþ oþur seyntis þat tellen þis wit of crist. ffreres seyn priueyly þat þei spake here eresie, siþen anticrist þer mayster seiþ euen þe contrarie. ¶ þe secounde vertu of þes þre⁶ many freres reuersen,⁶ for crist tauȝt in hijs lawe þat men schulde not begge, but holde euen his ordre, & þei schulde come to heuen; þes⁷ freres seyn þe contrarie, & grownden

¹ CC. inserts last.

⁵ omitted Q.

² þe Q.

⁶⁻⁶ moueþ freres to reuersen Q.

³ sake CC.

⁴ omitted Q.

⁷ þe Q.

hem an ordre of *þer* wilful beggyng, bi men þat han no nede; and herbi schulde men hope to sitt hye in heuen, for, as þei lien falsly, crist beggid¹ þus. ¶ þe þridde of þes vertues is contraried bi freres, siþen it is no charite to falsly passe crist. for crist seiþ to hijs cosyns þat by hijs manhed he had [Matt. xx. 23.] no power to ȝyue hem leue to sit on hijs riȝt² side, but to þe godhed in hijs fadure is propred þis power; but freres seyn opunly by letteres of here fraternite þat þei ȝyuen *þer* breþeren Charity in giving letters of fraternity. leue to haue part of *þer* blis; and þis myȝt þei not do but if and so claiming power beyond that of Christ. þei ȝouen men leue to sitt on þe riȝt hond of crist as if þei passed him. & þis sownes not charite but luciferes pride.

[*Capitulum 6^m.*]

* **B**vt siþ cloþinge of þis loue is myche loued of god, & more *[p. 127 MS.] worþe to man þan al þis worldes richessis, man schuld ful bisily knowe propirtees of þis loue. but poule, þat was rauesched vnto þe þrid heuen, & herde derne wordes of god, Properties of charity as told by St. Paul. [2 Cor. xii. 2.] [1 Cor. xiii. 4.] þat ben not here leful vs forto speke, telliþ sixtene propirtes þat suen þis charite. þe first is þat charite is patient of wronges. for al oure charite mut be ensaumpled of crist; 1. Is patient of wrong. but crist was so patient, as seynt petre seiþ, þat whan he was [1 Peter ii. 23.] mys-said he cursid not aȝen, ne when he suffrid wronges he manassid not aȝen. O what charite haþ he to suffre wronge for cristis loue þat wol not suffre a liȝt word, but ȝeld a worse aȝen? ¶ þe secounde propirte is þis: þat charite is benyngne. 2. Is benign. for it is not ynow to suffre, for so don þefis, but do good in soule aȝenus yuel suffrid; for þat is good loue of þe fire of charite, & is clepid benigne by propirte of word. and here-fore clerkis seyn þat *þer* ben þree lawes; þe first is lawe of oure good³ god to do good for yuyl; þe toþure is lawe of þe worlde, to do good for good & yuel for yuel, as mannus maner is; þe þrid is þe deuelis lawe, to do yuel for good, & þis is maner of men whan þei ben turned to deuelis. þe

¹ CC. inserts 'not.'

² omitted CC.

³ omitted Q.

3. Envieth not. þrid propirte þat sueþ þis secounde is þat charite haþe noon enuye to noon kyn þinge, for it loueþ wel god & alle goddis creatures.
4. Hurteth not. ¶ þe fourþe propirte þat sueþ of þis riche vertu is þat charite wiþ-uten forþe wirchþ not schrewidly for as þis first ʒock bigynniþ wiþ paciens, & siþen goiþ into worchinge of a mannus soule, so mut þis oþur ʒoc forsake yuel wiþ-inne, & ¹also wiþ-oute¹ bi ordre of god.
5. Is not puffed up. þe fyueþ maner of charite stondeþ in þis, þat it bolneþ not
6. Is not ambitious. wiþ pride, syn it is þus patient. & þe sixte sueþ here-of, þat it coueitþ not worldly worschip; for al worschipe of charite sche puttiþ oonly² in god. þe seueþ condicion þat sueþ þis³ charite is þat it sekiþ not propre godes to hir silf, but sekiþ worschip to god & profyte to his chirche. ¶ þe
- [8.] Is not wasteful. eyzt propirte of charite stondiþ in þis, þat charite wrathiþ þer⁴ not al if it suffre wronge, and þerfore it is liȝt to men to
- [9.] Thinketh no evil. stande with pees & charite. þe neynt propirte of charite is deppere þan þes oþere, þat it þenkiþ not yuel, for siche þouȝt turneþ to yuel; as iob maad couenaunt to þenke not
- *[p. 127b MS.] on a virgyne. ¶ þe *tenteþ propirte þat suiþ þis vertu of
10. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, charite is þat sche ioyethe not of wickidnesse, as aungelus in heuen ioyen of payn of fendis but not of here wickidnesse.
- [11.] butrejoiceth in the truth. & þerfore þis condicion sueþ after charite, þat it ioyeþ wiþ
12. Beareth all things. god of trowþe þat he loueþ. ¶ þe twelþe condicion þat sueþ þis charite is þat sche takeþ mekely what euere þing
- [13.] Believeth all things. þat comeþ hir.to. þe þrittente condicioun stondiþ in þis, þat charite trowiþ al þat euere god seiþ; and siþ no þinge is good but þat god seiþ, charite trowiþ alle good þing,⁵ ʒhe profyte of synnes. ffor men þat dreden god, if þei fallen in synne, þei ben more ware þat þei synnen not eft,⁶ & þanken more god of hiȝ gracious helpe, & alle medeful dedis haue þei part off.
14. Hopeth all things. ¶ þe fourtenep condicion þat sueþ after charite stondiþ in þis poynt, þat sche hopiþ alle þinge turneþ to good of goddis childur þat dreden him in loue. þe fiftente condicion
- [15.] Endureth all things.

¹ siþ yuel dede wiþoute CC.⁴ omitted Q.² hoolly CC.⁵ omitted Q.³ in Q.⁶ ofte Q.

þat sueþ þis charite is þat sche susteyneþ wiþ wille alle harmes þat comeþ, 3he¹ sche is not discounfortid if goddis helpe bideþ longe. ¶ and so þe laste condicion þat sueþ þis [16.] Never faileth. blessid vertu is þat sche falliþ neuer doun, but lastiþ forþe for euere in þis world & in þe toþure, as loue of god failiþ not. & if a man knewe² no more of goddis lawe but þise sixtene condicions & bisyede him to kepe hem, he myȝt liȝtly come to heuen & wite who went amys.

Expliciunt ffeif hope & charite.³

¹ 3hit Q.

² koude CC.

³ only in CC.

XXV.

DE SACRAMENTO ALTARIS.

IN this little tract Wyclif sums up the difference between his teaching on the Eucharist and that of the friars. It is curious to see him taking up the position of a loyal son of the Church, and complaining that his adversaries accuse the Pope and the Court of Rome of heresy. As the tract is evidently a fragment, it may be that in the larger piece from which it was taken he had alleged some utterance of the Roman see in his favour; perhaps the oath of Berengarius, to which he often appealed, although his opponents might have cited it on their side with at least equal confidence.

Copied from the Bodleian MS. (A), and collated with the Dublin MS. (AA).

SUMMARY.

The friars say that the bread which Christ broke is neither bread nor his body	.....	p. 357
They accuse the Church of sharing their heresy	.....	357
The true faith is that the Host is both bread and Christ's body	.....	357

De sacramento altaris corpus domini.

* Of ¹al þe ¹feip of þe gospel gederen trewe men, wiþ opyne ^{*[p. 96 MS.]}
 confescioun of þes newe ordris, þat men shulden rette hem These new orders
 eretikis, & so not comyne wiþ hem. for þei denyen þe gospel are heretics.
 & comyn bileeue, þat þat breed þat crist took in hise hondis They deny that
 & blesside it & brac it & ʒaf it to hise disciplis for to ete, was the bread that
 his owne bodi bi vertu of his wordis. & þus þei denyen þat Christ broke was
 þe oost sacrid, whijt & round, þat bifore was breed, is maad his body;
 goddis bodi bi uertu of hise wordis. but þei seien þat þere is but say that the
 goddis bodi, & þat is not goddis bodi, but it is nouȝt or host is accident
 accident worse þan ony breed; & þus þei accusen þe court of or nothing.
 rome, bishops & prelatis, & seien þat þei shulden seie so bi
 cristen mennys bileeue. & no wondir is, siþ þes freris
 accuseden þer breþeren & þei² bigan first at crist; & seiden
 þat he was as³ an eretyk, & oure king wiþ his rewme, but
 hem shamede to seie þis openli, but þei seiden þis priuyli.
 & siþ þei han lastid so longe in þis errour *cristen men ^{*[p. 97 MS.]}
 shulden flee hem as heþen men out of þe feip. & if þei Christian men
 somene symple men for þis accusing, symple men seien þat should avoid
 þei supposen freris siche, but þei affermen not hem sich; but them.
 euydence þei han of þis errour in bileue, & many oþere þat
 freris seien, and if þis be not soþ, late þes freris purgen hem,
 for we han herd ofte-tymes many freris techen þus.⁴ Crist What the true
 & his apostlis & þe olde seintis þat weren til þat þe fend was belief is.
 vnboundun, & þe courte of rome bi open witnesse of her lawe,
 techen þis bileue; þat þe sacrid oost whijt & round þat men
 seen in þe preestis hondes is veri goddis bodi in forme of
 breed. but freris, siþ þe fend fader of lesyngis was vnboundun,
 seien þat it is an accident wiþ-outen suget or nouȝt, & mai in

¹⁻¹ omitted AA.³ omitted AA.² omitted AA.⁴ AA. breaks off here.

noo wise be goddis bodi; & so þei glosen þe wordis of holi writt euen to þe contrarie, & þei leuen þe wordis of holi writt, & chesen hem newe founden termes of hem-silf, & seien þat þei ben soþ, but þe wordis of holi writt ben false & ful of eresie; and so þei seien priuyli þat crist & hise apostlis & þes oolde seintis & þe court of rome weren opyn eretikes.

XXVI.

THE CLERGY MAY NOT HOLD PROPERTY.

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE WRONGFULNESS OF THEIR UNDERTAKING
SECULAR WORK.

No external evidence authorizes us to attribute this tract to Wyclif. It does not even derive credit from being bound up with other works believed to be his, since it fills the little volume in which only it is found.

Dr. Shirley admitted it to his catalogue on the ground of style, and it is only on that ground, and for its general consonance with Wyclif's habits of thought, that it can be ascribed to him. I find it very difficult to arrive at a decided opinion. On the one hand, it is more orderly and less vivacious than most of Wyclif's pamphlets; with scarcely any of his characteristic outbursts of lament over abuses or invectives against those who practise them. It relies more, too, on citations of authorities than is his custom. On the other hand, there are passages that look like his work, such as (p. 368) the story of the bishop who looked forward to the time when the gentry should be the hired soldiers of the Church, and the warning (p. 372) that when the clergy have once got power, "the secular party may go pipe with an ivy-leaf," (otherwise whistle for) the return of any part of it.

In substance the tract is purely Wyclifite, but it has no trace of his latest developments. If it is by the master, it must be one of the earliest compositions in this volume, as it has much more likeness to his writings of 1365-1375 than to those of his latest years. The difference will be strongly felt if it is compared with the *Supplementum Trialogi*, which deals with the same subject.

Copied from the Lambeth MS. (LL).

CHAP. IX.	God provided for all states that he ordained, and he commanded the priests to act as proctors for the poor, and be content with food and raiment p.	386
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	It is wrong to divert it to the clergy; yet the clergy have laid hands on it, under pretence of holiness	392
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	Lords should look that they do not set up prelates who neglect their duty as watchmen	395
	Authorities (in Latin) against the secular lordship of priests	396
	Authorities against the secular office of priests	402

*[p. 2 MS.]

[1 Cor. iii. 11.]

* *Fundamentum aliud nemo potest ponere preter id quod positum est quod est cristus Jhesus.*

[*Capitulum i.*]

The Church is founded on three states, answering to the three persons of the Trinity.

Secular lords answer to the Father—

Rom. xiii. [4.]

*[p. 2b MS.]

[Rom. xii. 19.]

who are God's vicars for punishing and rewarding.

*[p. 3 MS.]

To the Son answers the estate of clergy.

Almyȝty god þe trinyte, fadir, sonne and holy gooste, boþe in þe olde lawe and þe newe haþ fowndid his chirche up-on þre statis, awnswerynge or acordynge to þes þre persones and her propirtes. So þat to þe fadir in trinyte, to whom is apropred power, awnsweriþ þe state of seculer lordis, fro þe hiȝest knyȝte, þat is, or schuld be, þe emperoure, to þe lowest sqwyer þat by wai of office of his state beriþ þe swerde. For þis state in holy chirche saynt poule calliþ powers, and saiþ þat þis power beriþ þe swerde not wiþ-owte cause, but to avenge þe wraþ of god in-to hym þat misdoiþ, *and to supporte and mayntene hym þat wel doþe. þis is þe sentence of poule þere. And þis state or power is þe vicar of þe god-heede, as it may be growndid here. And as saynt Austyn saiþ in þe booke of qwestyons of þe olde lawe and þe newe, and in oþer dyuers placis. And so as it bylongiþ to þe godheed of criste to avenge hym on his ennemys and to rewarde his trewe saruandis, as god hymselfe saiþ, as þe apostle rehersiþ: “To me,” saiþ god, “it longiþ to do vengance and I schal rewarde.” And also þe prophete seiþ þat “god shal rewarde euery man aftir his werkis.” So it by-longiþ here up-on erþe to þe state of seculere lordis, as vicars of þe godhede, to do in ponyschyng and rewardynge to *þe ennemyes and seruandis of god.

To þe secunde persone in trinyte, to whom is apropred wisdom or kunnyng, awnsweriþ þe state of þe clergy or of presthode; þe whiche by bissy study and contemplacyon schulde gete hem heuenly kunnyng, wherby þai schulde teche þe peple þe way to heuen and lede hem þer-inne.

And herfor saiþ god by his prophete Malachie: “*Labia sacerdotis custodiunt scienciam, et legem exquirunt ex ore ejus, quia angelus domini exercituum est*”—“þe lippis of þe prest kepyn kunnyng, and the pepille schul seke þe lawe of his mouþe, for he is þe awngell of god.” And herfor criste, supposynge þat þis heuenly kunnyng schulde be in the state of presthode, commaundid hem alle in his ascencyon in þo wordis þat he saide to *his apostles, and in hem to alle *[p. 3b MS.] oþer prestis, as saynt awstyn saiþ in a sermon þat bigynneþ Austin. þus: “*Si diligenter attendites etcetera,*” þat þai schulden teche and preche þe gospelle to his peple, þe whiche gospel is heuenly kunnyng. For þis state in þe chirche is þe vicar of which is the vicar of Christ’s manhood, þe manhede of criste, as saynt austyn saiþ in a booke þat is alegyd to-fore. And so as criste cam in his manhede to teche and preche þe gospelle and to suffre meekly persecucion þerfore, so schulde þe state of prestis, þat ben vicaris of his manhede, do as he commaundit hem in his ascencyon and and should follow his commands. oft-times byfore.

To þe þridde persone in trinyte, to whom is apropryd true To the Holy Ghost answers *[p. 4 MS.] the state of the commons. loue or goode wille to þe fadir & sonne, *awnsweriþ þe state of þe comonte, þe whiche owiþ true loue & obedyente wille to þe statis of lordis & prestis, as saynt poule techeþ, saynge: “*Serui obedite dominis vestris carnalibus cum omni timore et tremore,*” þat is: “Seruandis obeyiþ to þour temporalle lordis wiþ alle drede and tremblyng.” Also saynt poule saiþ þus: “*Obedite prepositis vestris; ipsi enim vigilant tanquam reddituri rationem pro animabus vestris:*” þat is: “obeiþ to þoure souereyns; forsoþe þai waken as for to þeue acowntis for þoure soulis.” By þes souereyns is undirstonde þe state of presthode; þe whiche schulde bisyly wake in studiynge and prechyng of goddis lawe to alle cristen peple, and to þeue goode ensauple in her lyuyng. And in þis euery man *is bonden to obey to her doctrine. And *[p. 4b MS.] þerfore poule saiþ: “Be þe fylowers of me as I am of criste.” [1 Cor. xi. 1.] And efte he saiþ; “þou; we or an awngelle of heuen preche Gal. i. [8.] to þou bysidis þat þat we han prechid, be he acursid.” And

Priests should
have no worldly
lordships.

These thre states
are enough.

*[p. 5 MS.]

so bi þis sentence prestis schulden not haue worldly lorde-
schippis; siþ criste and his apostles han uttirly forfendid hem,
boþe in her lyuyng and techyng, as it suiþ playnly her-aftir.
For it was neuer cristis lore to make prestis riche and
knyȝtis pore. And so þes þre statis ben, or schulde be,
sufficient in goddis chirche; or ellis men mosten say þat god
is and was fawty in ordenance of boþe his lawis. And in
full euydence and open tooknyng þat god takiþ þis or-
denance in his chirche *as full sufficient, and in no wise
fawtye in scarste or excesse þer-of, criste, þe wisdom of þe
trinyte, by whiche wisdom þe chirche is ordend and fowndid
up-on þes þre statis, techiþ us in all his lawe to kepe &
to mayntene þis ordenance with-owten addyng þer-to or
abregyng þer-fro. wherfor poule saiþ: “no man may
putt an oþer grounde bysidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is
criste ihesu.”

Capitulum ij.

In the old law
God assigned all
possessions to the
laity.

*[p. 5b MS.]
None to the
priests,
Num. xviii. [20.]

who were to live
of the offerings
to God,

such as first fruits
and tithes,

Ere it schal be schewid how god hatiþ worldly lordeschip in
h þe state of his clergie, þat schulde performe the perfeccyon
of þe gospels. For in þe olde lawe, wher god made an
ordynance how & wher-wiþ þai schulde lyue in every state,
he assigned þe worldly possesseyons to þe *seculer party, and
bad þat prestis schulde by no way haue eny possescions wiþ
þat oþer partye of þe peple. Saue þe people was chargid of
god to ordeyn þe prestis and deeknys housis, not to be lordis
of hem but to dwelle in hem. And on þe same wise þai
hadden subarbis to fede þer þe beestis þat schuld be offred
sacrifice to god in þe temple. And god saide he wolde be þe
parte of þe prestis and deknys; þat is to mene, þat þo þingis
þat I schal assigne to hem, þe whiche þingis ben offred to me,
schal be her parte and her lyuyng. And so god assignyd to
þe prestis and deknys þe first fruytis and tiþis and oþer
certeyn deuocyons of þe peple, þe whiche was lijflode I-

nowȝe *for hem wiȝ alle her seruandis and oȝer meynȝe. *[p. 6 MS.]

And he chargid sore and harde þe peple to þenke on his clergi, and þat þai defraude not hem of þe parte þat god haȝ assignyd to hem. For þai hadden noone oȝer possesyon amonge þe oȝer peple, ne eny schuld haue. So þat goddis parte was þus assignyd to þe trybe or kynrede of leuy; of þe whiche kynrede wern goddis prestis in þe old lawe, and of noone oȝere. And þis ordynance of god as tochyng þe

which God charged the people strongly to pay.

liflode of prestis was kept ful streytly, so fer forþe þat þo þingis þat wer offrid to god in þe temple by deuocyon of þe peple, þe whiche wer not by þe lawe of god expresly assigned to the kynrede of leuy, weren kept *fro þe use of þat

The priests might not even have offerings unless expressly assigned to them.

*[p. 6b MS.]

kynrede to þe comon profete of alle þe peple; as to þe repaire of þe temple, and to rawnson þe kyng and þe rewme at nede, as scripture berip witnesse in the tyme of goode kyngis Joas & Josias. For siȝ god had assigned lyflode to þe

4 Kings xii. [4-15] and xxii. [4-7.]

kynrede of leuy aftir his owne witte, and he may not be fawty in his worchinge or ordenance, it had ben a dampnable presumpcion for to haue ordend more lijflode to hem. And not-wiȝstondinge þat kyng dauid, purposynge to encrese þe

Example of David,

worschip of god in his peple, ordend syngers and players in dyuers musical instrumentis to serue byfore god in þe temple; ȝit presumyd he not to take eny þinge þat god had assigned to þe temporall parte of his peple, and endowe wiȝ siche goodis þes *mynystres of þe temple; but he chese þes men

*[p. 7 MS.]

of þe tribe or kynrede of leuy and lett hem lyue on her owne parte, and so kept þe temporalte hoole wiȝ-owte eny peyr-ynge þerof. And salamon his sonne, the wisest kyng þat

and of Solomon,

euer was, dide þe same. And siȝ kyng dauid, þe chosen of god aftir his owne herte & full of þe spirite of prophecie, and salamon his wise sonne also, durste not chawngge þe ordenance

who would not alienate goods given to them.

of þe goodis mouable and vnmouable, þe whiche god had bytake to her gouernance, and make prestis ryche, as þouȝ god had not sufficiently ordend for hem in his lawe. And wiȝ þis, not-wiȝstondynge þat kyng dauid was so fulle of vertuous and kyngly condycions þat he is sett in scripture as

*[p. 7b MS.]
Our kings should
not dare to do
otherwise.

The old law in
this is confirmed
by the new.
*[p. 8 MS.]

This point is a
part of the moral
law, not to be
destroyed or dis-
pensid with.

Christ and his
'college' kept
this law.

Whence did
monks, canons,
etc., get exemp-
tion from it?

*[p. 8b MS.]

Num. xviii. [20.]

a patrone & ensauple *of alle goode kyngis, how dar oure kyngis, þat han not þes ȝiftis of god, so expresly aȝens goddis lawe, þe olde and þe newe, presume to ouerturne all the gloriouse ordinance of god a-bowte sicke temporaltes, and make the state of presthode lordis aȝens þe lyfe and þe lore of criste and his apostles, and aȝens þe proces of þe olde lawe in þis poynte, confermyd bi þe newe? In whiche he haþ so openly, in worde, dede, and in ensauple, tauȝte and commaundit hem þat þai schuld not be lordis so. And understonde þu here, þat whan þer is eny þinge dampned of god in þe olde lawe, if þe same be dampnyd in þe newe, alle þe euydence þat ben aȝen syche a defawte in þe olde lawe ben euen aȝens þe same *in þe newe. And so all þe lawis þat god ȝaue by moyses aȝens þe worldly lordeschip of prestis of þe olde lawe be euen aȝens þis, þat prestis schulde be lordis so in þe newe lawe. Siþ þat moyses lawe is moralle in þis poynte, þat longeþ to þe perfeccyon of presthode, criste myȝte not distroy þes lawis neiþer dispens wiþ hem, þat prestis schulden not now be bunden to þes lawis. And siþ criste and his colage myȝt not be dispensid wiþ ne be exempte fro þe bondis of þe olde lawe in þis mater, I merueyle wher þe pryuelegis comen alonde wherby owre colagis of monkis, chanons or eny oþer endowid prestis þat dwellen in sicke conventycles claymen to be exempt fro þis bonde of þe olde lawe *in this poynte, þat in so many placis so opynly forfendiþ hem sicke lordeschip; for þus it is writen: “Dixit dominus ad aaron In terra eorum nichil possidebitis nec habebitis partem inter eos Ego pars et hereditas tua in medio filiorum israel. filiis autem leui dedi omnes decimas israel in possessionem pro ministerio quo seruiunt mihi in tabernaculo. Nichil aliud possidebunt decimarum oblatione contenti, quas in usus eorum et necessaria separaui”—“þe lorde sayde to aaron, and in hym to alle þe tribe or kynred of leuy, of þe whiche kynred wer þe prestis & deeknys: ȝe schal haue no possescyon in þe londe of þe childern of israelle. I am þine part & þine erytage in þe myddis of þe sonnys of israelle. And I have

ȝoue to the sonnys of leuy alle þe tiþis of *israel in-to *[p. 9 MS.]
 possesscion, for þe seruyce þe whiche þai done to me in þe
 tabernacle. þai schal haue noone oþer possessyon, þai schal
 be payde wiþ offrynge and tiþis þe whiche I haue departid
 in-to her vsis and nedis." Also in þe booke of Deutronomy Deut. xviii. [1.]
 god saide thus: "*Non habebunt sacerdotes, et omnes qui de*
eadem tribu sunt, partem et hereditatem cum reliquo populo
israelle; et sacrificia domini et oblationes comedent, et nichil
aliud accipient de possesscione fratrum suorum"—"þe prestis
 and deeknys, and alle þo þat ben of þe same tribe, schal not
 have part and heritage wiþ þat oþer peple of israel; for þai
 schal ete þe sacrifice and þe offryngis of þe lorde, and þai
 schal taake no þinge ellis of þe possessyon of *her breþern." *[p. 9b MS.]
 Also it is writen þus: "*Tribui autem leui non dedit posses-* Josue xiii. [33.]
cionem: quoniam dominus deus israel ipse est possesscio eorum,
ut locutus est illi,"—þat is, whan moyses assignyd þe
 possesscyon of þe londe of israel amonge þe peple, he ȝaue no
 possesscion to þe tribe of leuy. For whi, þe lorde god of israel
 is þe possesscion of þat tribe, as he haþ spoken to hym. Also
 þes lawis, ȝouen of god by moyses, þe holy prophetis tauȝten.
 As amonge oþer we may rede of Ezechiel, þat tawȝte how
 þe prestis & deeknys schuld haue hem-sijlfe to godwarde in
 lyuyng and sacrifice doyng; for he saiþ þus: "*Non est* Eze. xliii. [28.]
autem eis hereditas, ego autem hereditas eorum: et posses-
*cionem non dabit is in israel, ego enim *possessio eorum.*" *[p. 10 MS.]
 "Forsoþe þer schal be noone heritage to hem; forsoþe I am þe
 heritage of hem; and ȝe schal ȝeue no possesscion to hem in
 israel, for I am þe possessyon of hem." And saynt Jerom
 saiþ acordynge her-to: "*Clericus nichil preter dominum*
possidere debet, scilicet, non aurum, non argentum, nec Ep. xxxiiij.
possessiones; quia cum huiusmodi non vult dominus esse pars."
 "A clerke schal haue no possession but god; þat is to say,
 neþer gold, ne siluer, or possessions, for wiþ siche god wille
 not be parte, þat han more þan is necessary to performe her
 office wiþ. Of þis processe be-fore we may se how expresly
 god forfendiþ lordeschip to his prestis in þe olde lawe; and

Priests under the old law could not
*[p. 10^b MS.] *glose away their obligations as now they do.* þai cowde not schake away þis bonde by a contrari glose, lijke *as oure prestis kan now. And bi þe same bonde oure prestis ben bonden to kepe þes lawis, as tochyng þe auoydyng of worldly lordeschipis. And ouer þat þai ben bonden to þe same by a more perfyte lawe þan wer þe prestis of þe

Yet now priests should obey more perfectly since they have richer promises. olde testament; þerfore þai schulde be þe more wiþdrawe fro seculer lordeschip þan prestis of þe olde lawe; namely, siþ þe olde lawe byhotiþ for þe kepyng þerof prosperite of þis lyfe, and þe gospelle bihotiþ þe kyngdome of heuen. And so no man may putte an oþer grounde bisyde þat þat is putte þe whiche is criste ihesu.

Capitulum iij.

Ore ouer we may se how euen aȝens cristis wordis in

M þe gospelle prestis ben þus lordis, wher criste saiþ þus :

*[p. 11 MS.]
 Luke xxii. [25.]

“Reges gencium dominantur eorum, vos autem *non sic”—

“þe kyngys of heþen han lordeschip on hem, but ȝe not so.”

Christ has forbidden priestly lordship, both by word and example,

And also aȝens his ensauple þai ben lordis; for whan he was sowȝte to be made a kyng, & so to take in hym worldly lordeschip, he fledde in-to þe hille and prayde, in toknyng þat sicke lordeschip was contrarie to þe state of þe clergi, þat schuld lyue in contemplacyon. But clerkis nowe lyuen not oonly contrariously to þis techyng and ensauple of criste, but also þai maken stronge lawis reuersyng boþe his wordis and dedis, and letten, in alle þat þai may, hem þat wolde teche þe trouþe of criste. And, by þis lawe þat þai han made, sum

but the clergy not only disobey him, but make laws reversing his commands,

of hem han saide þat þai schuld gete owte of þe seculer hondis alle *the temporal lordeschip þat þai may, and in no caase delyuer noone aȝen. And þerfore a gentelman axid a greete bischop of þis londe: “In caase þat þe clergy hadde alle þe temporal possescyons, as þai han now þe more parte, how schal þe seculer lordis & knyghtis lyue, & wher-wiþ? siþ god haþ in boþe his lawis alowid her staate and her lijflode.” And þen he awnswerid & sayde þat “þai schuld be clerkis soudyoures, and lyue by her wagis.” And certis

*[p. 11^b MS.]
 by which they aim at getting all property into their hands.

Avowal of a bishop.

his lawe of getyng in of þes temporaltes and þes oþer wordis of his bischop ouȝte to be taken hede to. For siþ þai han now þe more part of þe temporal lordeschips, and wiþ þat þe spiritualtees and þe greete *mouable tresouris of þe *rewme, þai may lightly make a conquest up-on þat othir party; namely, siþ þe temporal lordis ben not in noumbre and in ryches lyke as þai wer sum tyme; for þai ben sotilly spolid of her lordeschipsis, in distroyng of her staate and power þat god sett hem in, and þe party of þe clergy in alle þes poyntis ben encresyd, and so couetously þai ben sette up-on þes goodis þat þai welden now, & mo þat þai hopen to haue, þat þai will not suffre her couetise to be enpugnyd openly ne priuely, als ferr as þai may lett it. For þe gospel of Jcn saiþ þat bischopis and pharises sayden of criste: “If we leuen hym þus alle men schul byleue in hym, *and romayns schulen comme & take oure place and oure folke.” For þai dredden hem of criste, ȝif his wordis wenten forþe, þat romayns schulden comme and fordo prestis and phariseis. As if bischoppis and abbotis spaken to-day to-gedre: “hyde we goddis lawe, lest þes seculer lordis comme and take oure lordeschippis and fordo oure statis.” “And fro þat day,” þe gospel saiþ, “þai þouȝten to sle criste.” So now by more malyce þai killen hem þat techen þe trouþe of cristis gosselle. and in þat þai suffre not criste to be alyue in þe sowlis of his peple bi qwike faythe, whiche commiþ by knouleche of his lawe, þat þai so cruely hyden fro þe peple; & þis is more cruel killynge of criste þan to kille hym bodely in his owne persone, *for þer-of came þe mooste goode to mankynde, þat is, saluacion of þo þat ben chosen to blisse. But of þat oþer maner of killynge of criste by hidyng of his lawe may no goode come; for it is aȝens þe plesance of criste, & mooste lykyng to þe fende and lesyng of sowlis. And þerfore saynt poule saiþ: “Si opertum est euaungelium nostrum: hiis qui pereunt est opertum: in quibus deus huius seculi excecauit mentes infidelium” (2 cor. 4)—“ȝif þe gospel is hid, it is hid to hem

These things should be looked after.

*[p. 12 MS.]

The temporal lords are fewer and poorer than they were;

the clergy increased,

and intolerant of reproof.

John xi. [47.]

*[p. 12b MS.]

The Pharisees sought to kill Christ, because they feared the Romans might come and overthrow them. So the bishops, fearing for their lordships, slay them that teach the truth of Christ's gospel.

So the people cannot have the knowledge of which faith comes.

*[p. 13 MS.]

[2 Cor. iv. 3.]

*
þat perschen, in þe whiche god of þis worlde haþ blyndid þe mynde of unfeifful men." And þus whoso biþenkiþ hym

Our bishops and religious show the same kind of malice as did *[p. 13b MS.] bishops and scribes in Christ's time.

what maner malyce was practisid aʒens criste by bischopis and scribis and religious in tyme of his bodily presence here, þe same malice in kynde *he schal fynde, ʒhe uphepid, in oure byschopis and religious. And as þe peple of israel wern werste gouernyd undir her prestis, whan þe gouernance was

The worst government of the Jews was under the priests.

commen holy in-to her hondis, and undir þat gouernance come in her mooste confusion & losten þe holy londe for euer; so ben now cristen rewmys foule confoundid by worldly gouernaunce and lordeschip þat prestis han take

So the secular power of priests brings confusion into Christian realms.

up-on hem. And alwey as þai getyn more & more of þis, so to more confusion drawen cristen rewmys. And for crist wolde not þat prestis schulde haue syche worldly gouernance,

Luke xx. [25.]

*[p. 14 MS.]

he saiþ to alle men: "Reddite que sunt cesaris cesari, & que sunt dei deo"—"ʒeldiþ to cesar þo þingis þat ben of cesar, and to god þo *þingis þat ben of god"; confermynge to þe secular party of the chirche þe material swerde wiþ his purtenance in þe persone of cesar, in whom þat tyme was chefly þis swerde, wiþ alle þe temporaltes þat longen þerto.

Cæsar should have what is Cæsar's; the temporal sword; and this includes all secular lordship.

And certis I drede not but þat þe secular party of þe chirche, & namely þe lordis, han als myche or more coloure of þe firste party of þis texte to chalenge oonly to hem þe temporal swerde, wiþ his purtenances þat longeþ þerto, as secular lordeschipis wiþ secular iugement & secular offyce, as oure prestis han euydence of þe secunde party of þis tixte to chalenge þe tiþis of þe peple, as þingis oonly longynge to

If priests were impartial, they would allow this. *[p. 14b MS.]

hem. And if þai wer indifferent, as þai demen þat it is wronge and *dampnable a secular man to take up-on hym a prestis office, in prechyng or minystryng of sacramentis, and in disposyng of tiþis, þat weren lymyted to þe state of þe clergy, so þai schulden deme it fulle dampnable a prest to ocupie þe temporal swerde, wiþ þe purtenance þat longiþ þer-to specified to-fore. And in full witnes þat þis lordeschip

Christ's example. He fled from being made a king,

is dampnable in þe state of presthode, crist, in whom is full ensaunple and lore of perfeccyon of presthode, fled alle þes

þingis; for he auoidid þis swerde in seculer office, and tauzte his apostles, and in hem alle oþer prestis, to do þe same whan he fled fro þe peple þat wolde han sett hym in þe office of a kynge. And whan he was requirid to ȝeue iugement bitwene two breþern *stryuynge for heritage, he wolde not *[p. 15 MS.] ȝeue þat seculer iugement, but saide: “Homo, quis me constituit iudicem aut diuisorem super vos?”—“Man, who made me a iuge or a departer up-on ȝou?” And so he

Luc. xii. [14.]
and refused to
act as a judge.

auoidid þis swerde, and left it to þe temporal party of his chirche wiþ all þe purtenances. And þis same lesson tauzte þe apostle: for saynt poule assigneþ þis swerde to þe seculer lordis, as it is saide bifore, and techiþ men to pray firste for suche men; þat þe peple mai lede a pesable lyfe undir hem.

The apostles
teach obedience
to the secular
powers.
[1] Tim. ii. [2.]

And he techiþ cristen men to obey to hem whedir þai ben cristen or heþen; ȝe, all-þouȝ þai ben tirawntes. And saynt petir techiþ þe same lesson, and biddid þe peple to obey to þe kynge, as to hym þat is passynge *oþer, & to duykys as to þo *[p. 15b MS.]

Eph. vi. [5.]
Titus iii. [1.]
1 Peter ii. [13.]

þat ben sent of þe kynge, in-to þe vengeance of schrewis & preysynge of goode men. And as touchynge þis seculer lordeschip, saynt petir techiþ how þer schulde be no lordis in þe clergy; and þis worde most nedis be vndirstonden of seculer lordeschip, þe which criste his maistir bifore forfendid to alle his clergi. Siþ þan þat þis lordeschip of þe clerkis is so openli aȝens þe wille of god, schewid in boþe his lawis, and so þai offenden god deedly, & euer schulen while it duriþ in hem,

it wer tyme þat cristis chirchē toke hede to cristis wordis, þe whiche he spak to petir figuryng þis chirche, and saide: “turne þe swerde in-to his place”; as þouȝ crist *wolde say þus: “þou

It is time that
the Church took
heed to Christ's
words,

my chirche, figurid bi petir, se how þe material swerde wiþ his purtenances is owte of his place; þerfor do as I commaundid þe, and turne þis swerde in-to his place wiþ his purtenancis, as secular lordeschipis, seculer office & seculer iugement, in-to þe seculer arme of my chirche, as I haue ordeyned.”

*[p. 16 MS.]

And certis, but if þe chirche here effectualy þis worde of criste, schal it neuer stonde in redy rule, ne aftir þe plesance of god; and þerfore lordis schulden take hede fulle tendirly to

or it will never
be in accordance
with God's will.
Lords must listen
to this voice of
Christ, lest they
be guilty of con-
sent to sin.

his voyce of criste þat saiþ: “turne þis swerde aȝeyne in-to his place;” for whi þis apostasie of þe clergie will not oonly be cause of dampnacion of hem sijlfe, but also of alle *þo þat mai amende þis & done not. For saynt poule saiþ he is not oonly worþi deþ þat doþe yuel þingis, but also he þat consentiþ to þe doer. Forsoþe alle þo consenten þat done not her power to amende syche defawtis. And þerfore no man may putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.

Capitulum iiij.

Apology for in-
sistence.

Eþelesse of o þinge I pray ȝou here, þat ȝe greue ȝou not, n all-þouȝ I forȝete not liȝtly þe materialle swerde wiþ his purtenances, and þat I desire hertly þat it wer turnyd aȝen in-to his kyndely place, wher god hym sijlf had putt it.

*[p. 17 MS.]

For whan crist was in þe hondis of his enmyes, wher co*munly men forȝeten hem sijlfe & all þat þai han to do, ȝit he byþouȝte hym on þis swerde, and saide to petir, & in hym to all his clergie: “turne þe swerde in-to his place.” And it wer nede

Danger of delay.

þat cristis chirche toke tente to þis word by-tymys; for þis swerde wiþ his purtenance may be drawe so fer owte of his place þat it wille be vnpossible to brynge it aȝen. For þus it stondiþ of þis swerde in fulle many londis, wher clerkis han fully þe seculer lordeschipis in her power; & it is ful like for to stonde in þe same wise wiþ-in a few ȝeris in ynglonde, but if þe knyȝthode of þis rewme sett þe sonner honde upon þis swerde to brynge it in-to his kyndely place. For well myȝte

Extent of evil,

we se*uer þat slepe of litergi þat is fallen up-on vs, þat þe clergi haþ fro day to day more & more honde vp-on þis swerde wiþ his purtenance. And so þai ben likly durynge þis slepe in þe seculer partye to pull þis swerde owte of þe seculer honde sodenly, and so to haue fulle power þerof, as clerkis in oþer diuers londis han. And wete lordis well þat, if þe clergi gete þis swerde oonys fully in her power, þe seculer party may go pipe wiþ an yuy lefe for eny lordeschipis þat þe clerkis wille ȝeue hem aȝen; for it wer aȝens þe lawe þat þai

*[p. 17b MS.]

which increases
daily.

If once the clergy
get full power,
they will not part
with it again;

han made as touchynge sicke lordeschipis; bi þe whiche lawe for they have
þai ben bonden to gete in-to þe clergie als myche of þe laws forbidding
possessiones as þai may, and in no caas to ȝeue eny sicke them to part with
property;

*lordeschipis aȝen in-to þe seculer honde. And þis lawe, as *[p. 18 MS.]

experience techiþ vs, is streytly ynouȝ kepte amonge hem. and they keep
For alle day it is seen þat seculer men ȝeuen her temporall ly. their laws strict-

possessiones to þe clergi; but cowde I neuer seen ne here þat
eny sicke lordeschipis wern ȝeuen aȝen to þe seculer party.

Neþeles I wote welle þat þe clergi will sai here, þat all her They allege the
bissynes þat þai han in þis worlde a-bowte sicke lordeschepe, rights of the
Church.

as in stryuyng, pletynge, chydynge, and fiȝtynge, is for the
ryȝte of holy chirche. But certis it is merueyl how & by
whos autorite þis riȝte cam a place. For welle I wote þat god

is fulle lorde of alle þis worlde aboue and also of the erthe
bineþe, as þe prophete dauyd saiþ: “*Domini est terra &*

*plenitudo *eius*”—“þe erþe and þe plente þerof is þe lordis.” [Psalm xxiv. 1.]

And welle I wote þat þer is no lorde here of þe erþe, but if he

hold of hym as chefe lorde, & haue his lordeschip & hold it by autorite of þis lorde god. And wel I wote forþermore But all property
is held under God
as chief lord,

þat þis chefe lorde haþ ȝeue a decre vp-on his clergi, boþe in who has forbidden
them to hold pro-
perty.

þe olde lawe & in þe newe, þe whiche may not be reuokid
riȝtfully; þat none of þe clergie, þe whiche is ybonden by
his astate & office to sue criste in þe perfeccion of þe gospelle,

schulde eny sicke lorde be; as it is schewid openli before by
autorite of boþe þe lawis and by þe lijfe of criste and his

apostles. And þerfore þe holy doctoure origene writiþ þus of Origen. s. gen.
hom. xvi.

goode prestis & yuelle: “wolt þu wite what difference is bitwix
þe prestis *of god & þe prestis of pharao? pharao grawntiþ *[p. 19 MS.]

londis to his prestis; forsoþe god grauntiþ none partye in þe
erþe to his prestis, but saiþ, ‘I am ȝoure parte.’ þerfore alle

ȝe prestis of þe lorde þat reden þes þingis, take hede & se
what is þe difference of prestis; lest þai þat han parte in þe

erþe & taken tente to bissinessis and tilþis of þe erþe be not
seyn to be prestis of þe lorde but of pharao; for he wille þat

his prestis haue possessiones, & hawnte þe tylyng of þe felde
& not of þe soule; he wol þat þai ȝeue bissynes to þe londe,

- [Luke xiv. 33.] & not to þe lawe. But what *criste commaundiþ*, here ȝe: ‘He þat forsakiþ not alle þingis þat he haþ in possession may not be my disciple.’ Crist denyeth him to be his disciple þat haþ
- *[p. 19b MS.] *any þinge in possess[i]on, and him þat forsakiþ not alle þingis þat he haþ; & what do we? how rede we þes þingis oure sijlfe, oþer how expowne we þes þingis to þe peple? þe whiche renounce not þes þingis þat we han, but we willen gete to vs þo þinges þat we hadden neu^{er} bifore we cam to criste. That is to forsake pouert and bodely trauelle for to haue riches and ese. But certis þis is contrarie to þe apostles lijfe, as saynt
- Matt. xix. [27.] petir witnessiþ, saynge to *criste*: what schal be to vs þat han forsaken alle þingis & swen þe? so petir axed not lordeschip & ese of þis lijfe to rewarde for his seruyce.” And þerfor þe
- *[p. 20 MS.] holy doctoure Odo in a sermon saiþ, þat bigynneþ þus, **Ecce, Odo in sermone Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.* nos reliquimus omnia: “Abel is dede; þe bissynes of schipard and spiritual mornynge or weylunge is slayne; but cayme, þat is possession, is kept, ȝee and caym þe erþe-tyllere, is made þe hirde or gouernor¹ of sowlis. For it is not axyd in þe chirche if he kan welle teche, or if he kan wepe & weyle for synys, but ȝef he be caym, þat is an erþe-tilyere þat kan welle tillen þe londe. And it is no wondir þouȝ possession sle ful many, siþ it is venym. For þe same day þat the chirche was endowid bi constantyne, þer was herde a voyce in þe eyre: ‘to-day is venym sched in-to þe chirche.’ for the chirche was made more in dignite but lesse in religion. And if it be axid of sicke oone: * ‘where is þe schepe þat was bytaken to þe?’
- *[p. 20b MS.] he awnsweriþ ‘wheþer I am kepar of my broþer?’ as þouȝ he sayde, ‘what charge is to me of þe sowlis, so þat I haue welle ordenyd for þe temporalle goodis.’ Syche ben acursid, as cayme was, þat led owte þe schepe abel & brynge hym not aȝen, but disseyuen hym; of whiche god saiþ by þe prophete Ezechiel, her schipardis han disseyuyd hem.” Alle þis saiþ þe goode doctour Odo. To sicke holy sentence of scripture
- [Isidore.] & doctouris schulden lordis take hede; for saynt ysydre saiþ,

¹ gouer MS.

and it is putt in þe lawe: "Seculer lordis, pryncis of þe Ysydori senten-
ciarum l. iii. c.
xxi. worlde, schulden well wite & knowe þat þai schal zelde herd *[p. 21 MS.] rekenynge & acowntis to god for *holy chirche, þat þai han take of criste to kepe & to defende. For as saiþ the law; þer wheþer so euer þat seculer lordis rule holy chirche wel or yuelle, criste schal ax reknyng of hem. For undir seculer lordis power crist haþ sett þe rulyng and gouernynge of his chirche." And þerfore saynt Austyn, in þe boke of questyons Austin. of þe olde lawe and þe newe, & in oþer dyuers placis, saiþ þat kyngis and lordis ben vicaris of þe godhede. And saynte poule saiþ: "Not wiþ-oute cause knyȝtis beren swerde, but Rom. xiii. [4] to avenge þe wraþe of god in-to hym þat mysdoþe, & to supporte & mayntene hem þat done wel." ¹ And for worþines of þis astate saynt poule techiþ to pray first of alle for kyngis [1] Tim. ii. [2.] & knyȝtis, þat god ȝeue hem grace to gouern *hem selfe & *[p. 21b MS.] her peple, þat þai han in gouernance to þe plesance of god & to helþe of her owne sowlis. And herfor saynt petir biddiþ [1] Peter ii. [17.] þe peple to obey to kyngis, as to hem þat ben passynge oþer, & to dukys as to þo þat ben ² sent of kyngis in-to þe vengeance of mysdoers & to þe praysynge of goode men. And not-wiþstondynge alle þes autorites, þat ben rehersed afore aȝen þe lordeschipis þat þe clerkis occupien expresly aȝens goddis lawe, as it schal be pleynly proued her-aftir wiþ goddis help, ȝit þai sayen þat criste forfendiþ hem not siche worldly lordeschip, saaf þat þai schuld not be lordis aftir þe pompe & pride of þis worlde. But þis fleschly glose & many siche oþer þat þai han is no þinge to pur*pose. For god haþ *[p. 22 MS.] forfendit pompe and pride to all maner of men, and mysuse of his goodis; for he ȝaue neuer man leue to do synne. But vp hap þu art a clerke or a religious man endowid wiþ many worldly lordeschipis, and art wo þat euer crist was so yuel Rich priests may
think Christ ill
advised to speak
thus, avised to say, or þe euangelist to write, þes wordis; þe kyngis of heþen han lordeschip upon hem, but ȝe not so; and woldist liȝtly, and it wer in þine power, do þis worde & siche

¹ yuel MS. (This clause is not in the passage referred to.) ² bent MS.

oþer owte of þe gospelle for euer; as waiwerd clerkis wolden
 in seynt Austyns time haue done owte, & þai wisten how, þis
 Matt. xxiii. [2.] worde of þe gospelle: “*super cathedram moyses sederunt &c.*”
 “Vpon moyses chayer han siten scribis & pharyseis: alle þat
 *[p. 22b MS.] þai schal say to *þou kepe & do ȝe, but do ȝe not aftir her
 Austyn. werkis.” þus saiþ Austyn, de uerbis domini, *super isto textu.*
 And for als myche as þu maist not undo for euer suche textis,
 ne ȝit þu wilt do aftir þe letter of sicke textis; þerfore þu
 and want a gloss. saist þu most haue a glose. wel þan for goddis loue, If þu
 wilt glose þe textis of þe gospelle þat ben so euen aȝens þi
 lordeschip, glose hem as criste did and commaundid þe to
 ȝeue fulle credence to his glose, whan he saide: “ȝif ȝe leue not
 John x. [38], xiv. [11.] me for my wordis, leue ȝe þe dedis.” And if þu bileue
 They should take Christ's gloss, that is, his deeds. effectualy þis glose, þu schalt not oonly forsake þe lordeschip
 þat þu occupiest, but also, raþer þan þu schuldist be ocupied
 þerwiþ, þu schalt renne awai þerfro & hyde þe, as cristis
 John vi. [15.] glose saiþ þat he did. and if þu wilt not bileue ef*fectualy
 *[p. 23 MS.] cristis wordis neþer his glose, þan þu wilfully & obstynatly
 Or, forsaking Christ, they will become members of Antichrist. forsakist crist vtirly; and so þu bycummyst a lymme of
 anticriste, for no man may putt an oþer grounde bysidis þat
 þat is put, þe whiche is criste ihesu.

Capitulum v.

Ere we may se þat a clerk may not be a lorde, or vir-
 h tuosly occupi so seculer lordeschip. And ȝif þu wilt wete
 whi, me semiþ þat þis is a cause sufficient y-nowe. þat
 criste haþ forbodun hem þis lordeschip in playne wordis, as
 it is writen ofte to-fore, & glosid þo wordis wiþ his dedis;
 for whan he was souȝte to his passion, he profred hym silfe,
 but whan he was souȝte to be a kynge & to haue taake up-on
 hym þe material swerde wiþ his purtenances, he fled and
 Christ offered himself to his passion, but withdrew from kingship.
 *[p. 23b MS.] *hidde hym self and left þis swerde hooly in his place;
 techynge his prestis by þis ensample to do þe same. And it
 is no doute but þat þis ensauple was a commaundement to

cristis prestis to fle vttrli þis lordeschip. For as seynt gregory saiþ: "*Dominus ihesus cristus aliud nos sermonibus, aliud vero operibus ammonet. Ipsa enim facta eius precepta sunt, quia dum aliud tacitus facit, quid agere debeamus innotescit.*" Cristis dedis or ensaumples ben commaunde-mentis what we schulden do. And þat criste fled þis temptacion of þe peple & hidde hymself schuld teche prestis to fle, not oonly þis synfull & dampnable lordeschip in þe state of presthode, but also þat¹ þai fle þe occasion or the temptaci[on] *þer-of. And þis ensaumpled criste in his fleyng and hydyng. And not oonly þis, but also crist in his doyng dampnyd symony, þe whiche is takyng, or an unruely wille to take or to ȝeue, worldly goode for grace, or bi occasion of grace of god mynystred to eny creature. For whan criste had graciously & by myracle fed þe peple, þorow occasion of þat grace, þis peple was moued to take hym & make hym a lorde; but criste, a clere ensauple of clenness of prestis, by whom as goddis instrumentis grace is ȝouen to þe peple as þis grace was by þe preste criste, fled þis ȝifte. And in þis fleyng of criste fro þis lordeschip aftir þe myracle & grace þat god þe fadir had ministrid by hym, he dampned *þe ressauyng of þe lordeschip þe whiche siluestre toke of constantyne. And criste commendid & confermyd þe dede of þe blessid prophete helyȝe, þat refusid þe ȝiftis proferid to hym of Naaman after þe miracle & grace þat god had done by hym to Naaman. Neþelesse for þe more open knowleche of þat þat I moue here, þu schalt undirstonde þat þe casis þat bitydden bytwene constantyne & siluestre & naaman & helyȝe ben wondir like; for boþe þes seculer men wer grete lordis & mesels, and boþe weren helid bi myracle of god, & bi grace mynystred to hem bi þes two prestis. For Naaman was helid of god bi grace ministred to hym bi helyȝe. And constantyne was he[lid] *of god by grace ministred to hym bi siluestre, as his storie telliþ. and boþ

Gregorius omelia xvii.

His example is a command.

*[p. 24 MS.]

Christ in his deeds condemned simony.

*[p. 24b MS.]

Elisha's example.

4 Kings v. [16.]

Comparison between Elisha and Silvester.

4 Kings v.

*[p. 25 MS.]

¹ MS. inserts 'but.'

þai wer helid in oon wise, for in water schewid of god to þes two prestis, and bi þes two prestis schewid to þes¹ two sike men. And aftir þes gracis þus minystred by þes two prestis, Naaman proferid to heliþe wondir grete ȝiftis of mouable goodis, and constantyne proferid to siluestre boþe mouable & vnmouable goodis in wondir grete plente and excesse. But not-wiþstondynge þat naaman prayed fulle hertly heliþe, & enforsid hym þat he schuld haue take þo ȝiftis, vttirly he forsoke hem; but siluestre in þe same case toke þat þe emperoure proferid hym, boþe þe grete worldly *aray & þe wondir grete lordeschipis. And oo grete cause whi heliþe wold not assent to Naaman to take eny ȝiftis of hym in þis case was for þan heliþe had been a symonient, siþ his man giezi, þat ran aftir naaman and toke ȝiftis of hym þorow occasion of þat grace so minystred, was a symonyent, not-wiþstondynge þat þat grace was not ȝeue by hym in eny wise to Naaman, but þat he toke þo ȝiftis bi occasion of þat grace. how myche raþer his maister heliþe, þat had more kunnyng & was bounden to more perfeccion, schuld haue be a symonyent ȝif he had ressauyd þat goode, siþ þat grace was ministred to Naaman by hym. And no dowte þouþ siluestre had in þis case ressauyd but mouable goodis, he *schulde haue synned more greuously þan giezi did, or heliþe schulde ȝif he had ressauyd þat naaman proferid to hym; for siluestir trespassid aȝens a more perfite lawe. And what bi giezi & balam, what by Judas & symon magus, þat wer symonyentis acursid of god & ysmysten wiþ goddis vengeance, & what bi many faire euydencis of scripture & reson þat siche a man owȝt to haue had, he had many grete warnyngis of hydousnes & perille of þis synne ouer þat his predecessouris hadden; and alle þis agregeden hys syn. Here it may be knowen þat siluestre did not aftir þe ensauple of criste, þat fled whan he schuld haue be made a kynge & hidde hym self and so wiþ-stode it, but he proferid hymself to his

Contrast—
Elisha would not
take gifts.

Silvester took
what the emperor
offered.
*[p. 25b MS.]

[Gehazi.]

*[p. 26 MS.]

Silvester offended
against a more
perfect law.

¹ to þes to þe MS.

passion. But *siluestir did on þe *contrari* wise; for whan ^{*[p. 266 MS.]} he was sowȝte to passion, he hidde hym siȝlfe, as þe storie of ^{John xviii. [4.]} hym telliþ. And whan he was callid to þe state of þe ^{Silvester reversed} emperoure or worldly dignite, he in a maner proferid ^{Christ's example.} hym self; in als myche as he manly wiþstode not þe hidous & synfulle purpose of þe emperoure, but cowerdly consentid to his foly. And certis I drede not þat he had neuer better cause of martirdome þan to haue wiþstonde þis foli of þe emperour, in case þat he wolde by violence haue enforsid hym to þis lordeschip. For as a man may conceyue, in partye of þat þat is saide before, & of euydence þat wiþ goddis help schal sue her-aftir, þis wickid dede was *peruertynge* of *cristis* ordenances in ^{*[p. 27 MS.]} his ^{He should have withstood the Emperor's will.} chirche, & harmfulle & destruction to euery state þerof, & will be fynal confusion þerof but ȝif it be remedied. And so þis man had neuer so grete cause to fle & to hide hym self as whan he was callid to þis rialte; and þat he myȝte haue lernyd of *criste*, þat schulde haue be his maister, þat in þe same case fled & hidde hymself. And þouȝ vnkunnyngnes myȝte sumdele excuse þe emperour; ȝit þat ^{He had not the Emperor's excuse of ignorance.} myȝt not excuse þis preste, þat owȝte to knowe, as a þinge chefly bilongyng to his *perfeccion*, þat he schulde not be a lorde on þat wise. For no man may putt an oþir grounde biside þat [þat] is putt whiche is *criste ihesu*.

Capitulum vj.

Nd so who so lokiþ wel þe dede of siluestir, it was *ex- ^{*[p. 276 MS.]} a presly aȝens þe lyuyng & þe techynge of *ihesu criste*, as it is openli tawȝt bifore. And siþ þe endowyng of þe clergi ^{Endowment of the clergy is grounded on the donation of Constantine.} is groundid vp-on þis dede, we may se by þis processe how þe clergi is wondirfulle enfect wiþ symonye & heresie. For þis sinne in hem may not be vndo till þe *temporalle* lordeschip in hem be distried, whiche haþ envenemyd alle þe clergi. & ȝif we taake hede to þis processe, we schal not myche wondir, all-

þou; þe awngelle of god, aperyng in þe eyre in þe tyme of doynge of þis wickid dede, saide þes wordis: "þis day is venym sched or helt in þe chirche of god;" as gorram saiþ upon þe xij chapitre of þe apocalips. And þerfor saiþ *saynt Jerom, in vitis patrum: "Siþ þe chirche encresid in possesyouns, it haþ decresid in vertues." And herfore criste þat was in lyke case wiþ þes two prestis, heliþe & siluestre, in dampnyng of þis wickid dede þat haþ so myche harmyd & envenymyd his chirche, left þe way of siluestre, þat toke þis worldly lordeschip, and chese þe way of heliþe þe prophete, þat forsoke þo ȝiftis þat naaman proferid hym, and fled boþ symony & heresy. And so, as heliþe left þe grete richesse þat naaman wold haue ȝyue hym & tooke worþili þe pore ordenance & fyndyng þat a goode man & his wyfe proferid to hym; þat is to say, a lytille soler, a bedde, a borde, a chaire, & a kandilstek, þe whiche *ben acordyng to a studier or a contemplatyfe man; So criste forsoke seculer lordeschipis, & held hym payde wiþ þe pore liflode þat deuoute peple ministred to hym to his nedeful sustenance in his labours. And þus didden also alle þe apostles, as a man may conceyue of þe gospelle & in many oþer placis of her lijfis. For aftir tyme þat god þe fadir had wrouȝte þis grete miracle bi criste his preste, in releuyng of fyve þousande & mo þat wern in mysese of hunger, he avoydid siche worldly rewarde þat schulde haue be ȝoue to hym by occasion of minystryng of þis grace. Siþ þan þat criste & heliþe acorden to-gydre in þis case, & siluestre reuersiþ hem boþe here; *and siche contrarius dedis in casis þat ben so lijke mow not be glosid to-gedre, þan we most nedis, ȝif we will go a sure way, magnifie in worde & dede þe doynge of heliþe & of criste in þis case; siþ þat heliþes dede is commendid in scripture, and crist is truþe and autor of scripture. þan we moten dampne þe doynge of gyezi & of siluestre, þus ferr straying away fro heliþe & criste & his gospelle. And in þis writyng I blasfeme no more siluestre, & þes holy men and sayntis þat han ben siþ þis endowyng

Gorra.

*[p. 28 MS.]

[Jerome.]

4 Kings iv. [8.]

*[p. 28b MS.]

Christ lived on offerings,

as did all the apostles.
Luke viii. [3.]

*[p. 29 MS.]

We must praise Christ and Elisha

and condemn Gehazi and Silvester.

This is not blaspheming Silvester.

of þe chirche cam in, all-þouȝ [I] rehers & blame her synne,
þan I do petir & his felowis whan I say þat þai synfully
forsoken criste, or poule whan *i say þat he wickidly *[p. 29b MS.]
pursuyd *cristis* chirche. for I blame of no þinge wher-of þai
schuld be sayntis, no more þan I do þes apostles; alle-þouȝ I
blame her synnys, þe whiche þai hem self dampnyd, & wer
sori þat euer þai synned so. For petir wept sore for his
synne, as þe gospelle saiþ. and saynt poule, mekely knowlech-
ynge his synne, saide þat he was not worþi to be callid [1] Cor. xv. [9.]
apostle of criste, and þat bi-cause þat he pursuyd *cristis*
chirche. And on þe same wise *siluestre* and þes sayntis
diden, or ellis schuld haue do for her synne. For whan we
will preyse sayntis, we schul loke wherin þai suyd criste and
his lawe in worde, dede, or maners, and so fere þai ben worþi
preysynge *and no ferþer; for *crist* is þe mesure of vertuous
*[p. 30 MS.]
lyuyng & worchyng; and herfore he calliþ alle men to sue
Matt. xxviii. [20.]
hym & to lerne of hym, & namely *prestis* to teche þat þat he
tawȝte, and þan we may not erre. And herfore saynt poule
Eph. v. [1.]
[should be 1 Cor.
xi. 1.]
tauȝte *cristen* peple to sue hym, but no ferrer þan he sueþ
ihesu criste. And saynt petir remittiþ þe pepille to criste, for
to take of hym ensauple; saiynge þus: “Crist haþ suffred for
1 Peter ii. [21.]
vs, leuyng ȝou ensauple þat ȝe filow þe steppis of hym þat
did no synne, neþir was eny gyle founden in his mouþe.”
And so a man may euer saafly sue his lyuyng and techynge
wiþ-owte eny errynge; but & we sue in alle þingis eiþer
petir, poule, or *siluestre*, or eny *oþer synfulle man, we must
*[p. 30b MS.]
nedis erre in many þingis, as þai diden. Loke þan if *siluestre*
we must often
err, as they did.
suyd criste whan he forsoke þe pouert of þe gospelle & by-cam
a lorde vpon þe west empire of þe worlde. And if he so
did, þan preyse hym in þat doynge, & ellis not. for whi no
man may putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe
whiche is criste *ihesu*.

Capitulum vij.

I þis processe bifore saide men mow lerne to awnswere
 to þe comon argumentis þat couetous clerkis maken in þis
 mater to mayntene wiþ her synne. In þe whiche argumen-
 tis þai aleggen for hem þe sinnes of her predecessoris, saynge

*[p. 31 MS.]

Covetous clerks
 allege the ex-
 ample of saints;

þus, “seynt hue, seynt thomas and seynt swyþune *wer þus
 lordis, & þai wer holy men here & now ben seyntis in heuen;
 þan may we, be þe same skile, medefulli taake up-on vs þis
 temporall lordeschip, and sue hem in þis.” But ȝe schal
 undirstonde þat þis maner of arguyng holdiþ welle whan we
 argue of god; for it suyþ well, “criste did þus, saide þus, or
 wolde þus, þerfor þis was wel done, saide, or willid; & so in
 þis dede, worde, or wille, it is holsum, spedy & plesaunt to

but it is never
 safe to follow in
 all things any
 creature.

god þat we sue hym.” But whan we argue of an creature
 þis argument is to schorte; for it sueþ not, “Petir saide þus or
 did þus, þerfore he did or saide welle, and in þes wordis &
 dedis it is holsum to sue hym;” for þis maner *of arguyng is
 vnpreuyd in þat þat petir forsoke criste, & in þat þat he
 smote of malcus ere; so þat þis maner of arguyng of a
 creature is to schorte. And þerfor ȝe most argue þus: “Petir
 saide or did þus, and in þis saiynge or doynge he suyd þe life
 & þe lore of ihesu criste; þerfor petir in þis did or sayde welle,
 and in þis it is holsum to sue petir.” And so musten oure

They should
 prove that the
 saints followed
 Christ in this.

clerkis argue whan þai aleggen for her lordeschip þe lyuyng
 of her patrons & sayntis, & sayen þus: “Seynt thomas &
 seynt hwe & seynt Swiþune wer þus lordis, & in þis þai suyd
 cristis lyuyng & his lore; þerfor we may lefulli be þus

Gabriel will blow
 his horn before
 they prove this.
 *[p. 32 MS.]

lordis.” And I wote wel þat gabriel schal blow his horne or
 þai han preuyd þe mynor; *þat is, þat þes seyntes or patrons
 in þis suyden þe lore or þe life of ihesu criste. And of þis ȝe
 may se þat sicke nakid argumentis, þat ben not cloþid wiþ
 cristis lyuyng or his techyng, ben riȝt nouȝt worþe, alle-þouȝ
 þe clerkis ablynden wiþ hem myche folke in þis worlde. But
 here haue I no leyser to telle, all ȝif I kouȝde, what chesauce

and costis þe clergi makip, & what werris þai holden to con-
 tynu þis symony & heresi so vnauysely brouȝte in-to þe
 chirche. And ȝit þai sechen alle þe ways þerto þat þai kan,
 ȝhe in so myche þat [þai] gone openli armyd into þe felde to
 kill cristen men for to gete and holde sicke lordeschipe. And
 not-wiþstondynge þat seynt petir was so pore þat he had
 neþer golde * ne siluer, as he saiþ in þe dedis of þe apostles.
 And his oþer worldly goode he lefte whan he began to sue
 criste. And as tochyng þe tytle of worldly lawe þat he had
 to þat goode, he made neuer clayme, ne neuer resseyued aftir
 worldly lordeschip. And ȝit þai callen alle her hoole lorde-
 schip seynt petirs grounde or lordeschip. And þerfore saynt
 bernerd writiþ to ewgeny þe pope, saiynge þus: “ȝif þu wilt
 be a lorde, sike it by an oþer title but not by þe apostles
 ryȝte, for he myȝt not ȝeue þe þat he hadde not: þat he hadde
 he ȝaue, þe whiche was bissynes vp-on chirchis; wheþir he
 ȝaue lordeschip, here what he saiþ: ‘Be ye not lordis in þe
 clergi, but be ȝe made fourme & ensauple of cristis *flokke.’
 And lest þu trow þis to be sayde not of trowþe, take kepe
 what crist saiþ in þe gospelle: ‘þe kyngis of heȝen han lorde-
 schip vp-on hem, forsoþe ȝe not so.’ Se how pleyndly lordeschip
 is forbodyn to alle apostles; for ȝif þu be a lorde, how darst
 þu take vp-on þe apostilhede? or if þu be a bischop, how darst
 þu take vp-on þe lordeschip? playndly þu art forbodyn boþe;
 and ȝif þu wilt haue boþe to-gydir, þu schalt lose boþe, and
 be of þat noumbre of whiche god pleniþ be þe prophete ose,
 saiynge, ‘þai regneden but not be me, saiþ god.’ And ȝif we
 holden þat þat is forboden, here we þat is bodyn of criste: ‘he
 þat is gratter of ȝow, loke þat he be made as ȝongar *in
 sympilnes; and he þat is forgoer, loke he be a seruant.’ þis
 is þe forme of þe apostles lijfe; lordeschip is forbodon, &
 seruyse is boden.” þis saiþ saynt bernarde þere. And þerfore
 no man may putt an oþere grownde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe
 whiche is criste ihesu.

Efforts of the
clergy to main-
tain their lord-
ship.

Acts iii. [6.]

*[p. 32b MS.]
St. Peter had no
possessions; yet
they call their
dominion St.
Peter's ground.

[Bernardus de
consideratione]
libro ii. [cap. 6.]

1 Peter v. [3.]

*[p. 33 MS.]

Hosea viii. [4.]

*[p. 33b MS.]

Capitulum viij.

Vt ȝit I wote welle þat and clerkis & religious folke þat
 b louen unkyndely þes lordlynes, willen glose here & say þat
 þai occupien not siche lordeschipis in *propir*, as seculer
 lordis done, but in comoun, like as þe apostles & þe *perfite*¹ peple
 diden in þe begynnynge of cristis chirche, þe whiche hadden
 alle þinge in comoun, like as suche clerkis & religious saien
 þai han nowē. In tokenyng wherof as no man sayd of eny
 *þinge þat tyme, “þis is myne;” so oure clerkis & religious,
 namely, whan þai will speke in termis of her religion. A *pri-*
uate persone wille not say, “þis or þis is myne,” but in *persone*
 of alle his breþern he wille say, “þis is oure.” And ouer alle þis
 þai saien, more sutilly, þat þai occupie not þis bi title of seculer
 lordeschip, but be title of *perpetual almes*. But whateuer þis
 peple saien here, we mot take hēde to þe rewle of prefe þat
 fayliþ not, þe whiche rule *criste* techiþ vs in þe gospel in
 dyuers placis, wher he saiþ: “leue ȝe þe werkis, for whi by
 her werkis ȝe schul knowe hem.” And þis rule is wondir
 nedefulle to a man þat haþ a do wiþ eny men of þe pha*riseis
 condicions; For, as *criste* saiþ, “þai saien but þai done not.”
 And so as cristis werkis beren witnes of hym, as he hym
 sijlfe saiþ, & schewdyn what he was & how he lyued; so þe
 dedis & þe maner of lyuynge, or þe þinge in it sijlfe beriþ
 witnesse wiþ-oute fayle how it stondiþ amonge hem in þis
 poynte. And if we take hede þus bi þis rule we schal se at
 yȝe how þe clergie saiþ here *oper*-wyse þan it is. For in sum
 place in *priuate persone*, and in sum place in comunte, or
persone aggregate, whiche is alle oone, as saynt austyn saiþ
 vp þe sawter, þe clergi occupieþ² þe seculer lordeschip
 seculerli, & so in *propre*. For in þe same wise as þe baron
 or þe knyȝte occupieþ & gouerneþ his baronrye or his knyȝtte,

Acts iv. 32.

Clergy say they
have no private
property, but
hold in common.

*[p. 34 MS.]

They say, too,
that they do not
occupy as lords,
but by perpetual
alms.John x. [38], and
xiv. [11.]

*[p. 34b MS.]

Matt. xxiii. [3.]

This is untrue.

¹ *profite* MS.² *occupier* MS.

so after þe amor*tesynge occupieþ þe clerke, þe monke or chanon, þe colage or þe couente þe same lordeschip, and gouerniþ it by þe same lawis in iugement & ponyschinge; as prisonynge & hangynge, wiþ sicke oþer worldly turmentynge, þe whiche sum-tyme bylongyd oonly to þe seculer arme of þe chirche. ȝhe, oft-tymys we may se how þai bissyen hem to be kyngis in her owne, & reioycen hem fulle myche in þat cyuylite or seculerte, ȝif þai may gete it. And þis is an eydence þat þai wold gladly be kyngis of alle þe rewme or þe worlde. For wher her londis & seculer mennys franchisen to-gydir, þai stryuen who schal haue þe galows or oþer maner turmentis for felouns. þei kepen also vndir bondage her tenauntis & her *issue wiþ her londis. And þis is þe mooste cyuylite or seculer lordeschipinge þat eny kynge or lorde hap on his tenauntis. And þerfore we may se hou þai claymen in her goodis a maner of propre possession, contrary to þe comounynge of þe comon goodis in tyme of þe perfyte men in þe begynnyng of cristis chirche. And what-so-euer þe clergie sayen, þair dedis schewyn welle þat þai han not her goodis in comoun, lyke as criste wiþ his apostles & perfyte men hadden in þe begynnyng of cristis chirche. For in holdynge or havynge of her goodis is propir of possessyon & seculer lordeschipyng, þe whiche stondiþ not wiþ þe plente of cristis perfeccion in prestis; as it sueþ of þis processe *and of þat þat is declarid before. And as for þat oþer glose þat clerkis han here, where þai saien þat þai holden þes lordeschipis by title of perpetual almes. But here ȝe schul undirstonde þat mercy or almes is a wille of relevynge of a wreche oute of his mysese, as lyncolnyence saiþ in þe bygynnyng of his *dictis. So þat ȝif a man schuld do effectualy almes, he most loke þat he to whom he schuld do almes wer in mysese and had nede to be releuyd. In tokenynge wherof criste oonly assigneþ almes to þo in whom he markiþ mysese. And so of þis it wille sue, þat ȝif a man releue oo wreche & markiþ an oþere or mo, he doþe noon almes, *but raþer markiþ mysese. And myche more he doþe

*[p. 35 MS.]
They hold just as the knight or baron does, and execute lay justice.

They quarrel with lay lords for the gallows; they hold bonds-men.
*[p. 35b MS.]

*[p. 36 MS.]

Perpetual alms. Definition of alms.
[Marginal note in later hand "of lyncolne, Robart grosted was bis-hope a^o 1253, before Wicklyf 120 yeres."]
Dicto ii.

Luke xiv. [14.]

It is not alms to relieve one wretch and make another,
*[p. 36b MS.]

or to give to
those that have
no need;

and for this pur-
pose to take
property from
those to whom
God has given it,
is breaking his
laws.

*[p. 37 MS.]
[2] Cor. viii. [13,
etc.]

Quod superest
date elemosinam.
Luke xi. [41.]

*[p. 37b MS.]

No alms, then, to
give the clergy
what God gave to
secular lords.

noone almes ȝif he make riche þo þat han noone nede, for als myche as þai ben sufficiente to hem sijlf. þis haþ no colour of almesse, for þis may bettir be callid a woodnesse or a wastyng of goddis goodis. And ouer þis, if a man take þo goodis þe whiche god in þe best wise, euen & wiþ-owte errouris, haþ assigned to þe state of seculer lordis, & ȝeue þo goodis to eny peple þat haþ noone nede of hem, ȝhe, to whiche peple sicke goodis ben forfendit, þis schuld be callid noone almesse, but peruertynge of goddis ordynance, & þe destruccyon of þe state of seculer lordis, þe whiche god haþ aprouyd in his chirche. for as *saynt poule saiþ, “Almes-dede schuld be so rewlið þat it wer relevynge to þo þat ressavyn it, and no tribulacion to þo þat ȝeuen it.” And myche raþer it schuld not be vndoyng of þo þat done it. And herfore criste techiþ in þe gospelle to do almes of þo þinges þat ben needeles or superflue. And in þis dede a man schulde haue rewarde to þe nede of hym þat he doþ almes to, and to þe charge of his owne house. what almes þan I pray þe was it to vndo þe state of þe emperoure, & make þe clerkis riche wiþ his lordechipsis? namely, siþ crist confermyd to þe emperour his state wiþ þo þingis þat longyd þer-to, not-wiþstondynge þat þe emperoure þat tyme was heþen. And he haþ forfen*dit expresly his clergy in worde & in ensauple sicke lordeschip. And as þis was noone almes, so we mote say of oþer kyngys, dukis & erlis, barons & knyȝtis, þat ben vndo herby, & þe clerkis made riche & worldely lordis wiþ her goodis. wherfore it may riȝtfully be sayde: “No man may putt an-oþer grounde bi-sidis þat þat is putt þe whiche is crist ihesu.”

Capitulum ix.

Ere we may se, bi þe grounde of þe gospelle and be h þe ordenance of criste, þat þe clergy was sufficiencyly purveyed for lyfelode. For god is so parfyte in alle his worchyng þat he may ordeyn no state in his chirche but if he ordeyn sufficient liflode to þe sa*me state. And þis

God provided
sufficiently for
the clergy,
*[p. 38 MS.]

is open in goddis lawe whoso takiþ heede. And þat vndir as for all states. euery lawe of god as vndir þe law of innocens & of kynde, vndir þe lawe ȝeue by moyses, and also vndir þe lawe ȝouen by criste. In þe tyme of þe state of innocence, we know wel by bileue þat god had so ordeyned for mankynde, þat it schulde haue had lyflode I-now; ȝhe, wiþ-owte eny tenefulle laboure. And of þe lawe of kynde criste spekiþ in þe gospelle, seyinge þus: “Alle þinges þat ȝe¹ wollen þat oþer Matt. vii. [12.] men done to ȝou, do ȝe to hem.” And if þis lawe had be kepte, þer schuld no man haue be mischeuously nedy. And in þe tyme of þe lawe ȝeue by moyses god *made a fulle * [p. 386 MS.] & sufficient ordenance for alle his peple, and assigned þe fyrste fruytis and tiþis to þe prestis & deeknes. And alle-þouȝ þat he wolde þat þer schulde be alleway pore men in þe londe of israelle, ȝit he made an ordenance aȝens myschevous nedis, & commaundit alle þe peple þat þer schulde be on no wyse a nedy man and a beggere amonge hem; as it is wryten. Deut. xv. [4.] And so in þis lawe he ordeynynd sufficiently I-now for his peple. And in þe tyme of þe new lawe criste assignyd þe secular lordeschipis to temporalle lordes, as it is tauȝte byfore, and alowid þe comonte her liflode goten bi true merchandise & hosbondrie and oþer craftis, and in worde & ensauple he tauȝte his prestis *to be procuratouris for nedy peple & * [p. 39 MS.] pore at þe ryche men, & specifyed þes pore, & tauȝte how þai Priests should be proctors with the rich for the poor, þat wer myȝty schuld make a purviance for syche pore folke, þat þai wer not constrenyd by nede for to begge; as grete clerkis merken vp-on þis worde of þe gospelle where criste saiþ þus: “When þu makist þine feeste,” þat is, of almes, Luke xiv. [12.] “calle pore, feble, lame & blynde.” He saiþ not “latt sicke pore men calle vp-on þe,” but: “calle þu;” menyng in þat, þat þu schuldist make a purvyance for sicke peple þat þai be not myscheuously fauȝty. And for þe clergy he ordenyd sufficiently, techinge hem in worde and in ensauple hou þai and should be satisfied with food and raiment. schuld holde hem apayde wiþ lyflode & helynge, mynystred to

¹ we MS.

- *[p. 39b MS.] hem for her true labour *in þe gospelle, as it is wryten to-fore. Of þis þan þu mayst se houȝ god in alle his lawis haȝ sufficiently ordend for alle þe statis þat he foundit and aproued. And houȝ it were aȝens þe goodnes and þe wisdome of god to orden eny state but if he ordend sufficyent liflode þerto. Siȝ þen þis ordenance of god was sufficyent, als welle for þe clergi as for oȝer men, it semiȝ a foule *presumpeyon* to brynge in a new and a contrary ordenance of liflode for clerkis, vp-on þat ordenance þat crist had made for hem by-fore. Of þe whiche ordenance þe clergy fulle many yere aftir þe bi-gynnyng of cristis chirche, whan it was best gouernyd, helden hem a-payde. For þis meniȝ þat cristis *ordenance was insufficyent & worthi to be vndo. And if we take goode heede, þai hadden no more nede to plene hem of þis ordenaunce þan hadden þe oȝer two statis of his chirche, þe whiche in-to þis day holden hem apayde wiȝ þis ordenance of cristis, and desyren in grete party þat þis fayre and sufficient ordenaunce of cristis were fully kepte. And more sikirnes or ensurance may no man make of eny-þinge þan cristis haȝ of þis liflode to þe clergy. For crist not oonly affermiȝ to þe peple þat he wille not fayle hem in liflode & helynge, but also preueȝ þis by argumentis þat may not be asoylyd, so þat þai be true seruandis to hym. For crist meniȝ þus in his arguyng þer: “Siȝ god fayleȝ not briddis *and lilyes and grasse þat growen in þe felde, neiȝer heȝen men, hou myche raȝer schal he not fayle his true seruandis.”
- Matt. vi. [26.] And so þis purvyance of perpetual almes, þat oure clerkis speken of, meniȝ fawte of bileue & dispeire of þe gracious gouernance of god. Siȝ þan, as it is sayde bifore, it is noone almes to releue oo wreche and make an oȝer or mo; and to make hem riche wiȝ temporalle lordeschip, þe whiche ben forfendit to sicke peple; and namely if sicke almes-ȝevyng be distroyng or apeyryng of eny state apretyd of god in his chirche, it wille sue þat þe endowyng of þe clergy wiȝ worldly lordeschipe owȝt not to be callid almes, but raȝer alle a mysse, or wastyng of goddis goodes, *or distroyng of his
- Presumption in adding to the provision made by Christ,
- which was enough in the early Church.
- *[p. 40 MS.]
- The other states are content with Christ's ordinance.
- Christ's promise assures them of livelihood.
- So perpetual alms means distrust of God's governance.
- Endowment should not be called “almes,” but “all a miss.”
- *[p. 41 MS.]

ordenance, For as myche as þe clergi was sufficiently ordeynyd
 by criste. For whi þis almes þat clerkis speken of here
 made many wrechis, And it was þou to hem þat hadde no
 nede. And þus it is enpeyrynge not oonly of oone estate of All three estates
are the worse for
it. þe chirche, but of alle þre, of þe whiche I spoke of in þe
 bigynnyng. And so þis almes-þevynge haþ made alle owre
 rewme, þhe, & as I suppose, fulle nye all crestyndome, full
 pore and nedy and myscheuous ouer þat it schuld have be if
 þe clergy had holde hem payde wiþ cristis ordenance. But
 now þorou þis perpetual alamyse þat þe clerkis and religious Christ's ordi-
nance is
overthrown. folke callen almes, cristis ordenaunce is vndo in sum londis
 hooly, & in ynglonde for þe more party. *And it is likly to *[p. 41b MS.]
 be alle vndo in processe of tyme. For by amortesyng of
 lordeschipis þe lordis ben vndo in grete party. And þo þat
 ben lefte, by-cause þat hem lakkiþ her owne party þorow
 foly ȝifte of her auncetreris, ben ful nedi. Ferþirmore it may
 be vndirstonde of þis processe þat wiþdrawyng of þes Withdrawing
endowments
from the Church
is not robbery,
but restitution. lordeschipis from þe clergi, and restoryng of hem to þe statis
 þat god haþ assignyd hem to, schuld not be callid robbery
 of holy chirche, as oure clerkis sayen, but raþer riȝtwise
 restitucioun of goode wrongfully and þeuely wiþholde. And
 þerfore þer may noon oþe or a-vow bynde eny man to
 mayntene þis þefte and distryng of goddis ordenance, and
 þis greete harmyng of cristis chirche, as þe vow of iepte Judges xi.
 schulde not have bounde *him to kille & to sacrifice his owne *[p. 42 MS.]
 douȝter. Ne þe oþe of herode schuld not haue bounde hym Mark vi. [26.]
 to kill innocent Ion. But as Jepte schulde have broken
 his oþe or avow, and han offred an-oþer þinge þat had
 be plesyng to god and acordyng wiþ his lawe, as saynt [Austin.]
 awstyn saiþ vp-on þe same storie, so herode schuld have De questionibus
veteris & nove
legis. broke his oþe, and a-savyd innocent blode, and sore a-
 repentid hym for his vnavysid sweryng. And so schulden Lords are not
bound by oaths,
since the things
which they have
sworn to main-
tain are wrongul. lordis nowe breke her oþis, þat þai han unavisely and
 wiþoute cowncel of holy scripture sworne to mayntene þis
 þefte; þhe, heresy and symonye, as it is proued bifore, þe
 whiche oure clerkis callen perpetual almes. And not þus sue

*[p. 42b MS.] her predecessouris or progenitouris in *her foly dedis and oþis þat þai han made to mayntene þis mischeuous peruertynge of cristis ordenance; for as þe state of þe clergi haþ no power ne leve to make þe peple or þe lordis to synne deedly, or to distroye goddis ordenance in his chirche, so þai have no leve or power of god to cowncelle or to constreyne in eny case þe lordis or þe peple to swere to mayntene þis endowyng of þe clerkis and religyous folke, þe whiche is fulle grete þefte, heresy & symony, and wondir harmfulle to cristis chirche; as it is schewyd in þis procese and in oþer writen bifore. But þe lordis specialy schulde se here what wer plesynge not to þes clerkis but to god. And þat schulde þai do; for her-to þai ben bounden by vertu of her office vp payne of dampnacion. And þer may no man dispence *wip hem of þat boonde, stondynge her state. for no man schuld putt an oþer grounde bisidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.

Capitulum x.

It is deemed
wrong to alienate
entailed land,

Nd þerfore men demen it a grete synne to ȝeue lande a entaylid by mannys lawe fro þe persone or þe kynred þat it is entaylid to; ȝhe, alle-þouȝ it be not so ȝouen for euer but for a litille tyme. And þouȝ it be so þat þe persone or kynred, þat sicke londe is ȝeue to, be nedy and haue leue by goddis lawe to occupie sicke maner londe or lordeschip. and þis [is] demyd fulle grete synne amonge þe peple, not oonly to þe ȝeuer, but also to þe takere, for boþe þai done dampnable wronge to hem þat it is entaylid to, as þe peple demiþ; ȝhe, alle-þouȝ it be ȝoue for goode and true seruyce þat þe resseyuour *haþ done to þe ȝeuer bifore, or ellis bi way of almes of relevynge of þe persone or kynred þat is ȝeue to. Houȝ myche raþer þan, I pray þe, wip-owte comparyson, is it a grete synne, as wel to þe ressaueris as to þe ȝeueris, to take þe lordeschip þe whiche god, þat haþ fulle lordeschip up-on alle þe worlde, haþ

even for service
done, or as alms.
*[p. 43b MS.]

Then it is wrong
to take the pro-
perty that God
has assigned for
ever to one state

ȝoue bi perpetual lawe or riȝte to þe stade of seculer lordis,
 and ȝeue þis fro þat state, to þe whiche god entaylid þis ^{and give it to another.}
 lordeschip, to an-oþer straunge peple of an-oþir lyne, þe
 whiche haþ neþer nede ne leue of god for to ocupie it.
 And if oure prestis clayme tiþis as goodis in a maner entaylid
 to hem, for als myche as god in þe olde lawe had ȝoue &
 entailed sicke tiþis to þe kynred of levy and to noone oþer
 lyne; For criste cam of þe lynyage of *Juda, to whiche lyne *[p. 44 MS.]
 was no tiþis grauntid; And so as men supposen þis entaile
 was not expresly confermyd bi criste and his apostles to his
 prestis in þe new lawe. For as it is writen in policronicon,
 þe sevenþe boke, gregor þe sexte ordenyd first tiþis to be
 payde to curatis oonly. And ȝitt þai claymen so ferforþli ^{The clergy claim}
 þes tiþis, þat no man lawfully may wiþ-holde hem or minystre ^{tithes as inalien-}
 hem save þai. Ne þai may be turnyd or ȝouen to eny oþer ^{able,}
 state or kynred saue oonly to hem, all-þouȝ men wolden do
 þat undir coloure or bi titille of perpetualle almes; for þis
 schulde be demyd of þe clergy a dampnable synne & dis-
 troynge of holy chirche & sacrilege. Hou myche raþer þen
 is it an hidous and a *dampnable synne, to ȝeue or to take *[p. 44b MS.]
 away þe seculer lordeschipis fro þe state of seculer lordis, þe ^{but secular lord-}
 whiche god had ȝeue & entaylid to hem, bi þe same lawe ^{ships are held by}
 & riȝte by þe whiche he had ȝouen þe tiþis to þe prestis in þe ^{even stronger}
 olde lawe? and þis entaile was neuer interrupte or y-broken ^{sanction.}
 in-to cristis tyme & his apostles; and þen þai confermyd þis
 entayle bi lawe so stronge to þe seculer party þat no man,
 safe anticriste and his disciples, may openly enpugne þis
 entaile, as it is schewid bifore. And so as no man schuld
 presume to wiþdrawe, wiþholde or turne þe tiþis fro þe state
 of presthode, as þai sayne; so myche raþer schuld no man
 presume bi ȝeuynge or takynge to aliene þe temporal lorde-
 *schips fro þe state of seculer lordis. And þus clerkis han *[p. 45 MS.]
 not so myche coloure to sai þat þe lordis & þe lay peple
 robben holy chirche, if þai wiþdrew þe tiþis fro hem, for als
 miche as þai han take her temporaltes fro hem. And þis ^{Yet the clergy}
 takynge of þes temporaltes in-to þe handis of þe clergi haþ ^{have taken them}
 by robbery, and

that under pre-
tence of holiness,
Gen. iii.
as Lucifer de-
ceived Adam and
Eve.
*[p. 45b MS.]
Religious corpo-
rations are bound
by their own law
not to part with
any possessions,
even to their
founder.
*[p. 46 MS.]
Much more, then,
should laymen
not part with
property to
priests.
They have quite
enough with
*[p. 46b MS.]
tithes and offer-
ings,

neuer þe lesse malice of robrye & cause of malice in it sijlfe,
for als miche as it is done by symylacion of holynes, þe
whiche is double wickidnes. For þus lucifer robbid Adam
boþe of goodis of fortune, of kynde, and of grace. As þe
clergi haþ robbid, and ȝit doþe, þe chirche of þes þre maner
goodis; For riȝt as lucifer did þis harme to adam & eue,
vndir coloure of loue & frendischip & helpynge of hem, so
done now; *his awngelis, þes ypocritis, þat transfigure
hem sijlf in-to awngellis of liȝt, and disseyuen þe pepill by
fals by-heest of heuenly help, þat þai willen procure to hem
for her goodis as þai sayen. And if a bischop and his colage,
or an abbot and his couent, may not alien fro hem eny of þe
temporalateis þat þai han, ne ȝeue to her founder eny of þo
possessions þat he haþ ȝoue hem, what nede þat euer he haue,
I-bounden oonly by a posityue lawe or a tradycion þat þai
han hem sijlfe made; And if eny siche lordeschips be wiþ-
drawe, Alienyd or take fro hem by rechelesnes of her pre-
decessouris, þai owȝten on all wise, ȝhe, in-to þe deþe, labore
to [gete] þo possessions in-to her hondis *aȝen, as þai saien;
Hou myche more þan schuld not a seculere lorde or a layman
aliene fro hym & his issue, or fro þe state of seculere lordis
þe seculer lordeschippis þe whiche god haþ lymytid to þat
state? Siþ he is bounden by þe lawe of kynde for to ordeyne
for his children. And ouer þis he is bounden by goddis lawe
to susteyne þe state of seculer lordis, þe whiche is autorisid
in þe chirche bi criste and his apostelis. Of þis processe þen,
if a man take hede, he schal perceyue þe falsnes of þis glose,
whan oure clerkis and religious folke saien þat þai holden
þes lordeschipsis oonly by tytill of perpetual almes. For
certis siþ þes tipis & þis offryngis, þe whiche as I suppose
cowntirvaylen þe seculer lordis rentis of þe rewme or *ellis
passen as it is full likly (For þouȝ þai be lesse in oo chirche,
þai passen in an-oþer) and ben sufficient for alle þe prestis in
cristendome, & þai wer euen delyd; þen it wer no nede to
amortise seculer lordeschipsis to þe state of þe clergi; þe
whiche amortesyng is vndoyng of lordis & apostasie of þe

clergy. And if þis amortasyng wer not nedefulle, þen wer it noone almes, as it is declarid. And ouer þe tīpingis and offeringes þat ben now of certeyne, þe clerkis han many grete & smale perquisitiuys, þe whiche smachen of symony and extorcion; as þe first fruytis of vacant beneficis, prouynge of testamentis, for halowyng of chapels, chirchis, chauncellis and oþer ournementis of þe chirche, & for sacryng of ordres, & fulle many mo þat for multitude may not *wel be nowmbred. *[p. 47 MS.]

For welle niȝ alle her blessingis ben sett to sale and to prise in-to crystenyng & confirmacion. wherfor I may now sai, as I sayd at þe bigynnyng; “*Fundamentum aliud,*” & *cetera*—“No man may putt an-oþer ground bysidis þat þat is putt, þe whiche is criste ihesu.” þe whiche ground of lyvyng criste graunte vs to kepe, þat we may ascape þe euerlastyng paynys of helle. Amen.

[Appendix.]

[On the Wrongfulness of the Clergy holding Secular Office.]

Here-aftir it schal be schewid what peryl it is to prestis to be in seculer office, and to lordis to suffre hem þer-inne, or to excite hem þer-to.

Eynt Cypriane saiþ þat þorow þe councele of bischopis þer is made a statute, þat alle þat ben charchid wiþ presthode *and ordeynyd in þe service of clerkis schulde not serue but to þe auter, and to mynystre sacramentis, and to take hede to prayers and oryson. Hit is for-soþe writen: “no man berynge his knyȝthode to god entrike hym wiþ seculer nedis;” þe whiche oure bischopis and oure predecessouris biholdyng religiously & purveyng hoolsumly, dempten þat who so euer take mynystres of þe chirche fro spiritualle office to seculere, þat þer be noone offryng done for hym, ne eny sacrifice halowyd for his sepulture. For þai disserven not to be

and fees, of which
some smack of
simony.

All blessings set
to sale.

xxj q. iij cap.
Ciprianus.

*[p. 47b MS.]

2 Tim. ii. [4.]

- nempnyd byfore þe auter of god in þe prayer of prestis, þe whiche willen clepe away prestis & mynystres of þe chirche fro þe auter. þis saiþ saynte Cipriane. Here men mow se how perylous it is to þe kynge & seculer lordis to wiþholde eny preste in seculer bissynes. þis is preuyd þus, for euery seculere lorde by þe lawe of þe gospelle is goddis bayly. But if eny bayly hiryd a werkeman wiþ his lordis goode and putt hym to his owne seruyce, he must nede be vntrue to his lorde. Riȝt so is euery seculere lorde to oure lorde ihesu criste, but if he amende hym, þat takiþ a preste and puttiþ hym in his seculer office; brekyng þe heest of his lorde god þat commaundiþ: “þu schalt couett noon oþer mannys seruande.” And he wiþdrawiþ hym fro þe seruyce of god & fro þe kepyng of cristen mennys soulis, þe whiche he haþ take charge of, for whiche soulis oure lorde ihesu criste toke fleisch and blode, and suffred *harde deþe, and schedde his owne hert blode. þis perylous doyng of seculer lordis is boþe aȝens goddis lawe and mannys. It is aȝen goddis lawe; For as saynt poule saiþ: “No man þat is a parfyte knyȝte of god, as euery prest schulde be bi his ordre, entirmete hym wiþ worldly nedis & bissynessis.” And for þis ende, þat he may so plesse þat lorde to whose service he haþ putt hym-silfe, and þat is god. For siche worldly bissynes in clerkis is aȝens her ordre, and þerfore þe apostles sayden, as it is wryten in þe deedis of þe apostles: “It is not euen vs to forsake þe worde of god and mynystir to bordis of pore folke.” And if it was vnequite, as þe apostles sayden in her common decre, hem for to leue þe prechyng of goddis worde & ministre to þe *bordis of pore men; hou myche more vnequite and wronge to god & man is it, prestis to leue contemplacion, studie, preyer & preching of goddis worde, and mynistryng to pore folke, for þe service of a seculere lorde. Hit is also aȝens þe popis lawe; For he spekiþ to a bischop and biddiþ hym þat [he] warne openly prestis and clerkis þat þai be not occupied in seculer office, ne procuratouris of seculer lordis nedis & her goodis. And if prestis and clerkis ben so bolde
- *[p. 48 MS.]
- Luke xvi. [1.]
- A lord who sets a priest to secular office is like a bailiff who sets his master's servant to his own work.
- *[p. 48b MS.]
- 2 Tim. ii. [4.]
- He is acting against God's law.
- Example of the apostles. Acts vi. [2.]
- *[p. 49 MS.]
- iii. decre in fine.
- It is also against the Pope's law.

to occupie hem in sicke bissynges, and if þai falle aftir bi losse of lordis goodis; þan saiþ þe lawe, it is not worþi þat þai be holpen and socoured of holy chirche, siþ þorou hem holy chirche is sclaudred. And saynte gregori wrote to þe defen- [Gregory.] soure of rome in þis maner: "It is tolde to vs þat oure moost reue*rent broþer basile þe bischop is occupied in secular *[p. 49b MS.] causis, and kepith vnprofetably moote hallis; whiche þinge makith hym foule and distryeþ þe reuerence of presthode. þerfore a-noone as þu hast ressayvid þis maundement, co[m]pell hym wiþ scharp execucion to turne aȝen. So þat it be not lefulle to þe by noone excusacion to tarye it fyve days; lest if in eny maner þu suffir hym eny langer to tary þer-inne, þu to be coupable wiþ hym anentis vs." And so bischoppis & oþir prelatis ben holden to teche and enforme lordis to wiþdraw hem fro þis synne, and scharply to repreue prestis and curatis vnder hem þat þai ocupie no secular office. þis is prouyd þus. þe holy prophete Ezechiel saiþ: "If þe *wayte or þe wacche-man se ennemys cum, and if þe peple *[p. 50 MS.] be not warnyd & kepe not hem sijlfe, but ennemys cummen & sle þe peple; þen saiþ god þat þe pepille is take in her wickidnes. And of þe waite þat schuld have blowe in his horne wille god axe acountis and reknyng of þe blode and of þe deþe of þe peple." But now to goostly vnderston[din]ge euery bischop schuld be a waite or a wacchman, to telle & to warne byfore to alle þe peple by his goode lyvyng and techyng þe perelle of synne. And þis is þe reson whi bischoppis and oþir prelatis & prestis schulde not be occupied wiþ worldly nedis and causis; For sicke occupacions and chargis maken prestis slepyng & slumbryng in synne. And þerfore it is grete perelle to lordis to make *ouer hem goostly waytis and wacchemen, as bischoppis, persones and vikars, þat ben sleepers & slombreris in lustis of þe fleysch, & blyndid wiþ poudir of couetise of worldly riches, and so occupied in worldly nedis þat þai neiþer kan ne may kepe hem sijlfe, ne noone oþer man. For of þis perelle & sicke oþir a prelate þat haþ witt and kunnyng schulde scharply

Bishops should warn lords against this sin.

Every bishop should be a watchman, to warn the people against sin.

*[p. 50b MS.] Lords should be careful not to set up sleepy watchmen.

repreue & warne alle maner men, to þe schedynge of his owne blode, as criste did; and if he leue & blame not, þen he assentiþ to her trespassis and synneþ deedly. For as saiþ þe prophete malachie: “prestis lippis kepyn kunynge, and þe pepille schal axe þe lawe of god of his mouþe; for he is þe awngelle of god if he kepe welle þe ordre & þe degre of prest*hode.” And þerfore it is not lefulle to eny man to drawe to seculere office þe messangeris of criste, þat haþ so vttrly forfendit hem boþe in worde and in dede seculere office in presthode.

If eny man stonde in doute of þis sentence before; here suen autoritees of holy scripture and holy doctouris in latyn azens þe seculer lordeschip of prestis.

Ivilis aut secularis possessio fuit interdicta sacerdotibus & leuitis, ut patet Numer. xviii. Dixit dominus ad Aaron: In terra eorum nichil possidebitis, nec habebitis partem inter eos: Ego pars et hereditas tua in medio filiorum israel. filijs autem leui dedi omnes decimas israelis in possessionem, pro *ministerio quo seruiunt mihi in tabernaculo federis. Sequitur: Solis filiis leui mihi in tabernaculo seruientibus, & portantibus peccata populi, legitimum sempiternum erit in generacionibus vestris. Nichil aliud possidebunt, decimarum oblacione contenti, quas in usus eorum¹ et necessaria separaui. Item Deut. xviii^o: Non habebunt sacerdotes et leuite & omnes qui de eadem tribu sunt partem & hereditatem cum reliquo populo israel; quia sacrificia domini et oblaciones eius comedent, et nihil aliud accipient de possessione fratrum suorum. Deus enim ipse est hereditas eorum, sicut locutus est illis. Super quo glosa: Ministris altaris nec terrenis possessionibus acquirendis concessum est inhiare. vnde Matt. x^o: Nolite possidere aurum, neque argentum, neque

¹ earum MS.

pecuniam &c^a. et *post* pauca: dignus est operarius cibo suo.

Et alibi, Qui altari deseruiunt cum altare *participant. Non [1 Cor. ix. 13.]
*[p. 52 MS.]

enim opertum, quod qui semper altari debent seruire officio diuino, inhient terreno lucro, quibus dominus hereditas est.

Quid ergo illi deesse potest qui omnia habentem habet.

hec ibi. Item ezechiel xliiii: Non autem erit eis hereditas, [Ezek. xlv. 28.]

ego hereditas eorum: et possessionem non dabitis eis in israel, ego enim possessio eorum. Victimam pro peccato et

pro delicto ipsi comedent, et omne votum in israel ipsorum erit.

Super quo Jeronimus, libro xiii^o super ezechielem:

Qui autem talis extiterit ut ministret in sanctuario, et

ingrediatur atrium interius, et offerat deo sacrificium, ita ut

verus sacerdos sit, ymmo imitator eius de quo scriptum est,

tu es sacerdos in eternum secundum ordinem melchisedech;

iste nullam habebit partem nisi deum, qui est hereditas

eius, nec accipiet possessionem in israel, hoc est inter vulgus

ignobile, sed sacerdotalem, ut dicat de eo dominus: ego

sum possessio et hereditas eius; quem cum venerit loquatur

ac dicat, *tenebo illum nec dimittam illum; et psallet cum *[p. 52b MS.]

propheta, pars mea dominus. hec ille. Item, deut^o x^o: Non Deut. [x. 9.]

habuit leui partem in possessionibus cum fratribus suis, quia

ipse dominus possessio eius, sicut promisit ei. Item, Josue Josh. [xiv. 4.]

xliiii: non acceperunt aliam in terra partem nisi urbes ad

habitandum, et suburbana earum ad alenda iumenta et

pecora. Item, eccl. xlv^o: Nam sacrificia domini edent, que Ecclus. [xlv. 26.]

dedit ipsi et semini eius. ceterum in terra gens¹ non

hereditabit, et pars non est illi in gente. ipse enim pars

eius est et hereditas. Item, Mat. xx^o: Scitis quia principes Matt. [xx. 25.]

gencium dominantur eorum, et qui maiores sunt potestatem

exercent in eos; non ita erit inter vos, sed quicumque

voluerit inter vos maior esse, sit vester minister. Et

quicumque voluerit inter vos primus esse, erit vester seruus.

Sicut filius hominis non venit ministrari sed ministrare, et

dare animam suam redemptionem pro multis. Idem patet

¹ sic. MS. Vulgate, gentis.

*[p. 53 MS.]
[1 Pet. v. 2.]
Matt. Luc.

Mat x^o et luce xxii^o. Item *prima petri quinto*: *Pascite qui in vobis est gregem domini, prouidentes non coacti sed spontanée secundum deum: neque turpis lucri gracia, sed voluntarie: neque dominantes in clero, sed forma facti gregis ex animo. Item ad Thi^m vi^o: Habentes autem alimenta et quibus tegamur, hijs contenti simus. Nam qui volunt diuites fieri incidunt in temptationem et in laqueum diaboli. Item,

[1 Tim. vi. 8.]

Luke [xiv. 33.]

luce xiv: Sic ergo omnis ex vobis qui non renunciat omnibus que possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus. Item, Bernardus libro ij ad Eugenium papam: Esto, ut alia quacumque ratione hec tibi vendices; sed non apostolico iure. nec enim ille tibi dare potuit quod non habuit: quod autem habuit, hoc dedit, sollicitudinem super ecclesias, numquid dominationem. Audi ipsum. Non dominantes in clero, sed forma facti gregis ex animo. Et ne dictum sola humilitate putes; nonne eciam veritate. Vox enim domini

[Bernardus de
Consideratione,
lib. ii. cap. vi.]

Luke [xxii. 25.]

est in euangelio. luce xxij^o: Reges gentium dominantur eorum; et infert, vos autem non sic. Planum est, apostolis interdicitur dominatus. Ergo tu et tibi usurpare audes aut dominans apostolatum, aut apostolicus¹ dominatum. Plane ab alterutro prohiberis. Si utrumque simul habere velis, perdis utrumque. Alioquin non te exceptum putes de illo

Hosea [viii. 4.]

numero, de quibus sic conqueritur deus, Osee octavo: Ipsi regnauerunt sed non ex me. At si interdictum tenemus,

Luke [xxii. 26.]

audiamus edictum. luce xxii. Qui maior est vestrum, ait, fiat sicut iunior, et qui precessor est sicut qui ministrat. fforma apostolica hec est; Dominacio interdicitur, indicitur

Origenes.

ministracio. hec ibi. Item, Origenes super gen. omelia xvi^o. Denique vis scire quid intersit inter sacerdotes domini et sacerdotes pharaonis. Pharaon terras concedit sacerdotibus suis, dominus autem sacerdotibus suis partem non concedit in terra, sed dicit eis: Ego pars vestra. Obseruate ergo qui hec legitis, omnes domini sacerdotes, et videte que sit differentia sacerdotum, ne forte qui partem habent in terra,

¹ apostolatus MS.

et terrenis cultibus *ac studijs vacant, non tam domini quam *[p. 54 MS.] pharaonis sacerdotes esse videantur. Ille enim est qui vult sacerdotes suos habere possessiones, et exercere agri non anime culturam, Ruri sed non legi operam dare. Christus autem, dominus noster, sacerdotibus suis quid precipit audiamus: Qui non, inquit, renunciauerit omnibus que possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus. Negat christus suum esse discipulum quem viderit aliquid possidentem, et eum qui non renunciat omnibus que possidet. Et quid agimus? qui hec aut ipsi legimus, aut populis exponimus, qui non solum non renunciamus hijs que possidemus, sed & adquirere volumus ea que nunquam habuimus antequam veniremus ad papatum.¹ &c^a. per processum. Item, parysiensis Parisiensis. libro de vicijs, titulo de auaricia mercenariorum: Sciebat dominus oculum ecclesie impediendum esse temporalibus istis ab officio suo; Modicum enim pulueris vel *palee oculum *[p. 54b MS.] omnino cessare facit ab officio suo. Immo voluit duces ecclesie pauperes esse, eo quod paupertas expedita est, sicut seneca dicit, et subdit: Si vis omnino vacare ut pauper sis, ora ut pauperi sis similis. Et si cetera membra corporis ad plura officia conueniant, ut lingua ad gustum et loquelam, et manus ad multa similiter, oculus tantum vnum habet, et contactum terre maxime timet. Sic oculus ecclesie contemplatiuus legi diuine debuit intendere, et a terrenis istis seperari. licet pes hominis a ceteris membris eius seperatus non sit, tamen habet seperatam artem que ei deseruit, & artifices qui ei totaliter circa calciamenta eius intenti sunt. Quanto magis debent esse aliqui qui totaliter spiritualibus sint intenti. Sed hodie magis occupata est ecclesia in temporalibus, quo ad magnam partem suam, quam fuerat sinagoga. vnde quum fuit datum a *constantino imperium *[p. 55 MS.] occidentali ecclesie, facta est vox de celo, dicens: hodie infusum est venenum ecclesie dei. hec ille. Item Odo in Odo. sermone, Estote misericordes: Stercora putredinis sunt diuicie,

¹ 'Christum' Origen.

quibus volucres celi, i. demones, excecant oculos cupidorum. Et bene dicuntur diuicie stercora demonum, quum omnes diuicias reputant tanquam stercora, nec querunt nisi animam, vnde diues quum moritur quasi in tres porciones diuiditur; mundus rapit diuicias, vermes cadauer, et demones animam. Et quilibet contentus sua porcione alterius partem non desiderat; vnde versus:

Versus.

Spiritus est sathane, caro vermis mammona mundi;
Vnica plus duplici pars sua cuique¹ placet.

[Phil. iii. 8.]

*[p. 55b MS.]

Item non tantum a demonibus sed a perfectis diuicie stercora reputantur; vnde apostolus: Omnia reputavi tanquam stercora ut christum lucrifacerem. Pro hijs stercoribus cauidici clamant in foro; clerici quoque cantant in choro; medici cum egrotis vigilant *in thalamo. Pro hijs stercoribus frequenter illicita committuntur in mundo. Sequitur: potius cum thobia gaudeamus, qui, curata cecitate quam per stercora contraxerat, visum recuperavit. Sic cum diuicie auferuntur oculum iusticie recuperamus. Cum gladius furioso aufertur, sanitate restituta, gracias refert illi qui abstulit. Similiter si dolemus pro ablacione temporalium, quibus excecatur, quibus interficimur, furiosi sumus. Et reddita nobis discrecione, saltem in alia vita, illi qui nobis stercora ab oculis nostris extersit, illi qui gladium abstulit gracias referemus. Alibi appellantur venenum; vnde eodem die quo a constantino dotata est ecclesia, in aere audita est vox angelica, dicens; hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia; maior quidem effecta est in dignitate, sed minor religione. Item Odo in sermone Ecce nos reliquimus omnia: Abel moritur i. cura pastoralis, luctus spiritalis interimitur, set *caym, i. possessio, conseruatur; ymmo pastor animarum caym agricola efficitur. Non enim in ecclesia queritur si sciat bene docere, pro peccatis lugere, set si sit caym, i. agricola; si sciat terras bene colere. Nec mirum si multos interficit possessio, cum sit venenum;

Odo.

*[p. 56 MS.]

¹ cuilibet MS.

vnde eodem die quo dotata est ecclesia a constantino audita est vox in aere: hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia; maior quidem dignitate, set minor religione. Si queritur: vbi est ouis tibi commissa? respondet: Numquid custos fratris mei sum? quasi, Que cura est mihi de animabus, dummodo disponatur bene de temporalibus. Tales sicut caim sunt maledicti qui educunt ouem abel, et non reducunt, set seducunt. vnde Ezechiel: Pastores eorum seduxerunt eos. Item Gorham super illo Apoc. xii^o: Misit serpens ex ore suo post mulierem aquam tanquam flumen, &c. Per aquam fluminis significatur *abundancia temporalis, que fluit cotidie *[p. 56b MS.] : sicut aqua. vnde psalmista: diuicie si affluant, nolite cor apponere. hanc aquam habundantissime misit draco in ecclesiam dei, domino permittente, quum a constantino datum est imperium occidentali ecclesie; vnde tunc audita est vox angelorum¹ in aere dicencium: hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia dei; sicut legitur in apocrifo Siluestri. Et quia iam appropinquat venenum hoc ad cor ecclesie, ita ut iam sit suffocacio proxima, clamat ipsa ecclesia cum psalmista: Saluum me fac, deus, quoniam intrauerunt aque usque ad animam meam. Et deus de sua bonitate nunc primo incipit audire ecclesiam suam, et misit adiutorem suum, scilicet terram, que absorbere vult totum flumen; vel principem terrenum, qui vult auferre ab ecclesia omnia temporalia sua, licet intencio non eadem sit cum domino, qui propter bonum ecclesie mittit illum ex misericordia. hec ille. Item Jeronymus in vitis patrum: Jeronymus. Ecclesia ex quo creuit in possessionibus, decreuit in virtutibus. Item Jeronimus ad ne*pocianum ep. xxxiiii: Aut aurum *[p. 57 MS.] repudiemus nos, sc. clerici, cum ceteris supersticionibus iudeorum, aut si aurum placeat, placeant et iudei, quos cum auro aut probare necesse est nobis aut dampnare. Item Jeronymus ad nepocianum: Clericus qui christi seruit ecclesie primo interpretetur vocab[u]lum suum, et nominis diffinicionem prolata, nitatur esse quod dicitur. Si enim cleros grece latine

¹ anglorum MS.

sors appellatur, propterea clerici dicuntur quia de sorte sunt domini, vel quia dominus ipse sors, i. pars, clericorum est. Et quia et ipse pars domini est, et dominum partem habet, talem se exhibere debet, ut ipse possideat dominum et possideatur a domino. Qui enim dominum possidet, et cum propheta dicit: pars mea dominus, nichil extra dominum possidere potest; nam si quippiam aliud habuerit preter dominum, pars eius non erit dominus. verbi gracia, si aurum, si argentum, si possessionem, si variam suppellectilem habuerit, cum istis partibus dominus pars eius fieri non dignatur. Et paulo post: habens victum et vestitum hijs contentus ero, *et nudus nudam crucem sequar. Obsecro te itaque repetens, iterum iterumque monebo, ne officium clericatus genus antique milicie puteo, ne lucrum seculi in christi queras milicia, ne plus habeas quam quando clericus esse cepisti.

*[p 57b MS.]

Here suen autorites in latyn of holy scripture and doctouris aȝens seculeris office of prestis.

[2 Tim. ii. 4.]

Aulus apostolus dicit ij thi. ij^o ad excludendum prelatos p^r et sacerdotes ab omni seculari officio isto modo: Nemo militans deo implicat se negocijs secularibus, ut ei placeat cui se probauit. Iste autem textus brevis et compendiosus apostoli, ex fide quam importat, excluderet omnes sacerdotes et pure clericos ab omni officio seculari. Quum seculare officium est destructiuum cure pastoralis. Immo ex canone apostolorum dicitur: *Episcopus aut sacerdos aut diaconus nequaquam seculares curas assumant. Sin autem assumpserint deiciantur; quia, ut dicit gregorius ibidem, Inutile et valde laboriosum est hominem litteratum racionum causas assumere, et in eis que non expedit se obligare. Item, ibidem dicit beatus ciprianus, cap^o neque: In dispensacione ecclesie hanc regulam obseruandam nouerit unusquisque, ut nulli quantumlibet exercitate persone duo simul officia committat. Immo nomine sacerdotis careat qui dei ministros a suis evocet officiis. Et idem Ciprianus dicit quod ministri ecclesie debent solum

*[p. 58 MS.]
lxxxviij. de cap^o.
Eps.

altari et sacrificiis deservire, et precibus, studiis et oracionibus vacare. Et si quis eos a spirituali officio ad seculare duxeret, non offeretur pro eo oblacio, nec sacrificium pro sepultura eius celebrabitur; non enim ante altare dei merentur nominari in sacerdotum prece qui sacerdotes et ministros ecclesie ab altari volunt avocare. Immo dicit beatus Augustinus: fornicari hominibus nunquam licet, negociari autem **aliquibus* *[p. 58b MS.] lxxxviiij. de c^o. fornicari. licet, aliis non licet. Antequam enim ecclesiasticus quis sit, licet ei negociari; facto ecclesiastico iam non licet. Item ibidem scribitur sic: Tuicionem testamentorum episcopus non suscipiat. episcopus nullam rei familiaris curam ad se reuocet, set leccioni et oracioni et verbo predicacionis tantummodo vacet. Item beatus petrus in epistola ad clementem dicit xi. q. 1^o. c^o. Sicut enim impietatis est crimen tibi, o clemens, neglectis verbi Sicut. dei studiis sollicitudines seculares suscipere, ita unicuique laicorum peccatum est nisi inuicem sibi ecclesiam in hijs que ad communis vsum vite pertinent operam fideliter dederint. Ideo concludit lex canonica apostolorum statuta sunt que dicunt: Nemo militans deo implicat se &c^a. Proinde aut xi. q. iij. co. Credo. clerici sint sine accionibus dominorum aut actores sine officio clericorum. Et uniuersi dixerunt; hec obseruemus. Item ibidem sic scribitur hij qui in ecclesia domini ad ordinem promouentur clericorum, in nullo **ab* administracione diuina *[p. 59 MS.] auocentur, nec molestiis et negociis secularibus alligentur ut ab altaribus & sacrificijs recedant; set die ac nocte celestibus rebus et spiritualibus seruiant Item beatus petrus in epistola ad clementem sic scribit: Te quidem oportet irreprehensibilem xi. q. 1^o. c^o Te quidem. viuere, et summo studio niti ut omnes vite huius occupationes abicias. Non fide-iussor existas nec aduocatus licium fias, ne in ulla occupatione prorsus inueniaris mundialis negocii occasione perplexus. Neque enim iudicem neque cognitorem secularium negociacionum te ordinare vult christus, ne prefocatus presentibus hominum curis, non possis verbo dei vacare. Hec vero opera que minus tibi congruere diximus exhibeant sibi inuicem vacantes laici, et te nemo occupet ab hijs studiis per que salus datur hominibus &c^a. Item

[Decreti pars 1a.
Dist. lxxxviii.
cap. 4.]

*[p. 59b MS.]

gregorius Romano defensori: *perlatum* est, inquit, ad nos reuerendissimum fratrem nostrum, *basilium* episcopum, velut *vnum* de laicis in causis secularibus *occupari, et *pretorijs* inutiliter obseruire; que res quidem et ipsum vilem reddit, et reuerentiam sacerdotalem adnichilat. statim ut experientia tua hoc *preceptum* suscepit, ad reuertendum eum districta executione compellat, Quatenus te illic consistente quinque diebus sub qualibet excusatione immorari non liceat. Ne si quolibet modo eum ibidem amplius moram habere permiseris, cum ipso apud nos grauiter incipias esse culpabilis, &c.

Ista ad presens sufficiunt cum diligenti scripturarum excercitatione ad excitandum sacerdotes ne curis secularibus se subiciant; set oracioni, studio et predicationi intendant, et sic, spiritualibus inimicis deuictis, soli deo placere studeant; ut cum ipso in celestibus regnare valeant; prestante domino nostro ihesu christo, qui cum patre et spiritu sancto vivit & regnat deus. Amen.

XXVII.

DE OFFICIO PASTORALI.

A LATIN tract under this title has been printed by Dr. Lechler.¹ The two are substantially the same, often answering to each other chapter for chapter. Each, however, contains chapters which are not in the other, while in details of treatment and in language they are independent. In this case, as in his defence of the Conclusions condemned in 1377, Wyclif has published his argument in two forms intended to appeal to different classes of readers; and we cannot doubt that, in this instance as in that, both forms were issued simultaneously or nearly so. Dr. Lechler in his preface dates the Latin tract not later than 1378, and his judgment is supported by the mention (p. 457) of Avignon as the residence of the Pope; since Gregory XI., the last of the Avignonese Pontiffs who was recognized in England, died March 27, 1378. This English version of the tract is much more vehement against the friars than the Latin; although even that, by the use of the phrase 'castra caymitica,' shows that Wyclif had already taken up a position of settled hostility to the Mendicant Orders.

Copied from the Ashburnham MS. MM.

¹ *Johannis de Wiclif Tractatus de Officio Pastoralis e codice Vindobonensi primum edidit Gotthardus Victor Lechler. Lipsiæ, 1863.*

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*[p. 1 MS.]

*De officio pastoralis.

[Capitulum primum.]

There are two
offices in purging
the Church :

1. Of knights and
lords, to defend
the Church.

2. Of priests, to
preach God's law.

Their fighting
should be
patience and
suffering.

Two things be-
long to the office
of spiritual shep-
herd ; holy life
and sound teach-
ing.

Qualities needed
for the pastoral
office,

which is the
highest that
Christ has or-
dained.

er ben two offisis þat fallen to purging of þe chirche. þe
toon falliþ to knyztis & kyngis wiþ oþere lordis, þat shulde
defende wiþ strengþe þe lawe of crist in his boundis; & in
þis seruyss þei holden of crist al þe lordchip þat þey han, &
herfore þey shulden be war þat þey forfete not azenus þis lord.
for ȝif þei ceessen of þis seruyss bi lesse tyme or more bi ony
slouþe, god may not forȝete þis trespas but punysshe it in his
tyme; & bi þis cause ben lordchipis chaungid, nou encreessid
& nou destried. þe toþer offiss to purge þe chirche falliþ to
prestis, þat crist haþ ordeyned to telle generally his lawe to
lordis & comyns what þey shulden do, & to stonde for goddis
lawe to bodily deþ ȝif it be nede. & þus fȝting of þes cristis
knyztis stondiþ in paciense & passioun. & þus it is to saye
shortly heere of þe offiss of goostly herde. þer ben two þingis
þat fallen to þe offiss of þis herde, & þes ben hoolynesse of lif
& hoolsumnesse of his lore. A curat shulde preche to þe
puple treuþis of goddis lawe þat euere ben grene, for þanne he
lediþ his sheep wel in hool pasture þat wole not rote; & for
hoolynesse of lif techiþ rude men by groos ensauple, it is
nede-ful to þis herde & to his floc to lyue hoolily. & herfore
seyen hooly doctours þat þe lif of þis herde is a bok to lewyd
men, & a marke þat þei shulden sue aftir. & herfore siþen
crist is þe beste herde þat may not fayle in þis offiss, no
cristenman shulde sue his prelate but in as myche as he sueþ
crist. & þus an herde shulde passe in vertues his floc as þe
herde passiþ his sheep, for he shulde be so sad in vertues & in
suyng of þe firste herde þat neþer for coueytise ne fauoure ne
drede of deþ he shulde not fayle; for þis herdis offiss is þe
hierste þat crist ȝyueþ to ony man. & þus þey moten lerne
þe craft of loue, to loue crist bifore alle oþere, & þanne a man

loueþ þus crist whanne he kepiþ wel his biddingis; & ellis he is not worþy to haue siche a maystir, as þe gospel seiþ. & Matt. x. [37.] þus þis herde mut nedis knowe bileue, hope & charite. For ȝif he fayle in ony of þese he techiþ not wel his floce, *ne *[p. 1b MS.] puttiþ his lif for his sheep aȝenus þe wolf whanne myster is.

[*Capitulum*] 2^m.

s iþen a prest shulde be a mene bitwixe god & þe puple & teche þe puple þe wille of god, it is knowen þing bi skile þat whanne he erriþ in þis offiss he sinneþ more þan oþere men; & þus synnede scarioth more þan oþere comyn men. it is knowun bi bileue þat a man shulde not synne for to wyne al þis world, were it neuere so liȝt a synne; for ellis þis man synnede wel, & synnede not in synnynges þus. & þus a man shulde not synne al ȝif god bade hym synne, but god may not bidde man synne, as god hym silf may not synne. & siþen it mut nedis be synne to fayle fro suynges of crist, man shulde not fayle in þis suyt for god ne for ony creature. & it is knowun bi opyn skile þat it mut nedis be synne to fayle in suynges of crist for many resouns þer ben herof. for suynges of crist in vertues is so good þat it may not be yuel; and it is so liȝt a suyt þat no man is excuside bi noun power; & crist chees siche a lif to teche men to sue hym, & no man may come to heuene but ȝif he sue crist on sum maner. & þus al synne of man-kynde stondiþ in defaute of suyt of crist; & þus siþ ech cristenman haþ power of god to sue crist, he dissusiþ to myche his power þat vsiþ it not to sue þis lord. & heere men shulden be ware wiþ þe fend þat þey be not blyndid bi hym to seye who may be euene wiþ crist, & þus to allegge crist is but foly. þis is þe lewiderste fendis skile þat euere cam out of his leesingis; for men wolen not be euene wiþ crist ne go bifore hym as petre wolde, but sue crist neer or ferrere, & ellis þey moten go amys. & þis may ech man do oþer more nyȝ or ferrere. & þus summe gon bifore crist & summe contrarien hym in þer weye. þes men

Sin in a priest is worse than in other men.

A man should not sin, even if (per impossibile) God should bid him do so. It is sin to fail in following Christ.

Every man has power to follow Christ.

Men must not try to be even with Christ or go before him.

Men go before Christ who claim an ungrounded power, as in absolution.

gon bifore crist þat feynen hem an hid power for pride or for couetyise, alȝif þis power be not groundid in crist, & þus don prelatiſ nou-a-dayes in asoyling & priuylegies. & oþere men gon bifore crist þat trowen þat þey ben mouyd bi pite to stire a man to do a dede, & ȝit it is aȝenus goddis wille; & þus it semyþ þat petre was mouyd to lette crist to die for men, & herfore was petre clepid satanas & bedun go bihynde crist; for no drede petre hadde be dampnyd ȝif he hadde not sorowid

Those men go contrary to Christ that do the opposite of his bidding.

*[p. 2 MS.]

for þis synne. Þes men reuersen crist bi his godhed & his manhed þat han power of cristis godhed to do a þing vpon resoun, & ȝit þey letten to do it, doynge *þe contrarye her-of. & siþen god is þe firste resoun many men in omissioun synne aȝenus crist, & þey moten nedis contrarie to hym. & þus men of þes newe ordriſ reuersen crist as satanas, for þey leeuē þat crist biddiþ & don newe biddingis vnder his power.

Capitulum 3^m.

[1 Tim. vi. 8.]

Priests should be content to have food and raiment.

o f þis goldun bileue shulden prestis take þis reule of crist þat poul ȝyueþ to tymothe, & in hym to alle cristen prestis: “haunyng fode & oþere þyngis bi whiche we ben skilefully keuerid, be we payed wiþ þes two,” & do we werk þat prestis shulden do. for ech prest shulde sue crist bi þe power þat crist haþ ȝouyn hym; but ech prest may liȝtly þus sue crist ȝif he lette not hym silf, & þus synne excusiþ hym not þat he synne not in þis noun suyt. & þus crist lyuede a comyn lif þat ech cristenman may sue, & noon of hem may be euene wiþ crist, for nedis cristis godhed mut be bifore. & þus ech cristenman may renne faste & he shal ay fynde crist bifore hym; be he pore, be he riche, be he feble, be he witty, he may not fayle in his good wille þat ne he shal sue crist in þat. & þus shal ech cristenman do, be he herde, be he sheep; but ȝif he take to be herde he shulde passe in witty suyng; & þis reule þat poul ȝyueth mouyde apostlis & oþere prestis, til þat þe chirche of rome was dowid, to sue

This rule is strictly binding.

Each must follow Christ, but none can come up to him.

crist in þe gospels pouert, & what þing þat a prest haþ more he haþ his meede heere but not in heuene. & þus poul vndirstondiþ bi fode, mete & drynk þat ben couenable to do betere þe seruyss of god; & not lustly deyntees of prestis, neþer to make þer body wantoun, ne gete hem worchip in ouer-greet meyne. two maner of hiling ben nedeful to prestis þat shulden do þis offiss; hiling of resonable cloþis, & eke hiling of skileful housis. but be war heere þat synne of curatis brouȝt in bi custom in þes two be not cause of þy synne to spende to myche in oþer of hem. & siþen we shulden be pilgryms heere & rowe wisely in þis boot to heuene, ȝif we passen þis fode & hiling we chargen vs silf wiþ-
'Food' does not include dainties.
Raiment includes the shelter of a house.
We should be pilgrims here, and row in this boat to heaven.
Three temptations to break the Apostle's rule:
*[p. 2b MS.] the flesh, by feeding too lustfully;
the world, by living with too much pomp;
the devil, by pride moving to covetousness.
Three excuses:
1. Winning of worldly honour.
2. Need of money for almsgiving.
3. Provision for sickness or time of need.

outen fruyt. & þus prestis shulden be war þat coueytise ouer þis reule of crist lette not prestis to holde poulis reule, for þanne þey synne in auerise. & þus prestis may bi þre enemyes be temptid to breke þis apostlis reule; bi þer fleys, & bi þe world, & bi pride of þe fend. þat prest þat fedith *hym silf to lustfully to plesse his fleys mut passe resoun in his dispensis; & þat bringiþ in robbing of curatis. & þat prest synneþ bi þe world þat passiþ þis reule in to greet meyne or in to costly dispensis, & seiþ þe world nedith herto. he synneþ bi tempting of þe fend, þat bi pride or worldly worchip coueytiþ more of siche godis þan resoun axiþ to his offiss. & þus onest pouert is best, moost sure, & moost liȝt to prestis heere; & bi þis cause crist helde þis meene bitwixe begging & worldly richees. & heere ben þre excusaciouns þat ben seyð to excuse prestis synne. summe seyen þat for worldly worchip þey moten passe þis reule of poul; & þus þei desiren more worldly worchip þan worchip of heuene in staat of blis bi þe holding of goddis reule. but where is more foly of man? þe secound excusacioun of synne seiþ þat prestis moten do bodily almes, & algatis helpe folc of þer kynd. but þis telliþ an opyn blasfemye, þat crist was vnwiss in þis, siþ he vside not þis in word ne dede, for goostly almes is myche betere þan deling of þis worldly drit. þe þridde excusacioun of prestis is þat þey moten nedis gedere godis for sekenesse & eelde

& opere caassis to helpe hem in tyme of nede. þis is aȝenus þe lore of crist, to triste in help of worldly muc, & leeu to triste in god almyȝti for keping of his comaundementis.

Capitulum 4^m.

Antichrist argues that by this reason kings and lords should give up their wealth.

b ut heere anticrist argueþ aȝenus þis lawe of god þat bi þis same skile lordis þat lyuen worldlily shulden holde hem payed of þer fode & þer hiling, but where were þanne þer lordchip & þer tresour to helpe reumes?

God has ordained diverse members of Holy Church, and made things for their use.

many siche ape resouns han men herd aȝenus crist, as ȝif an ape wolde argue þus: “a mannus eye is in his hed of sutil fode & vnhilid, bi þe same skile shulde his foot.” þis fend

Riches not needful to priest's office.
*[p. 3 MS.]

mut lerne arguyng, & wite to what ende god haþ ordeyned dyuerse lemes of hooly chirche, & þeraftir shapun hem godis prestis shulden be in þe hierste staat, & sue crist in sure pouert. kyngis & lordis shulden be byneþe & shewe þe godhed of crist; & so hem falliþ to þer offyss to haue lordchip & worldly richees, & bi þis shulden þey shewe cristis power in his godhed. & cristis prestis shulden be pore & pacient bi cristis manhed. But hou ben worldly godis nedeful to kepe siche offiss of *prestis? clerkis shulden shame of siche resouns, & algatis hou þey passen crist in taking of worldly lordchipis & hauyng of erþely tresour, þat shulden be proper to worldly men. crist wolde not in his persone ne in his apostlis haue siche richnessis, but kepte lordchipis & worldly godis to kyngis

Worldly power and riches require work unsuited to priests.

& lordis of þis world; & certis þese axen bodily trauel & myȝti defense of goddis lawe þat shulden not acorde to prestis; wherfore shulden þei haue þes godis? & so worldly lordis

God gave them that lords might serve him in defence of his law.

shulden knowe wherfore god ȝaf hem þes godis, & serue god bi þes godis in myȝti defending of his lawe; for wite þey wel þat for þis defaute may þey be blamed of þis cheef lord. prestis shulden not lette þis ordenaunse, but helpe þat it were kept of þe chirche; for so dide crist in word & dede, why shulden not his prestis do so? auerous gederung of tresour is to blame in ech staat.

ȝit argueþ anticrist aȝenus þis lawe þat poul haþ teld;
 apostlis as þei weren tauȝt of god chesiden to hem seuene The apostles appointed deacons to distribute alms. Acts [vi.]
 dekenes to serue folc at þer mete & to do bodily almes. Why shulden not prestis do so, siþen þei kunnen wiseliere do þis?
 but heere men seyen as bifore þat þis smacchiþ an ape skile.
 for we graunten to þes spekeris þat boþe lower prestis &
 dekenes may serue trewe men & pore in departing of mete to
 hem; but þey shulen not bi þis offiss leue ay to preche
 cristis gospel. & so men shulden take heere good hede hou The goods were laid at the apostles' feet.
 apostlis gederide not þes godis, but seculeris puttiden hem at
 þer feet; & ȝit þei leften not to preche for departing of þes
 godis. & þus a clerik or spenser of a curat may parte þes A curate may employ his 'spenser' to distribute alms.
 godis in þe name of hym. what lewid skile shulde moue of
 þis þat prestis shulden be seculer lordis, or haue worldly godis
 in propre, siþen apostlis kepten hem fro þes two. & heere
 men answeren to þe þridde skile þat anticrist makith heere;
 poul techith hou þat bishops shulden ordeyne wel for þer hous
 & herbore men wiþ-cute grucching, but herto þei moten haue To the argument that bishops should be given to hospitality,
 wherof ouer þer fode & þer hiling. We graunten wel þat
 siche bishops as ben keperis of parischis shulden wel ordeyne
 for her housis boþe in prestis & oþer meyne, so þat þey
 hadden not to manye ne to ydil ne to synful. & siþen þey
 shulden haue ynow boþe of fode & of hiling, þey shulden not we say that they should have enough to help poor pilgrims,
 euere be so nedy þat ne þey myȝten helpe pore pilgryms. but *[p. 3b MS.]
 heere þei hadden need to be war of herboringe *of stronge
 beggeris & of myȝti men of þe world to haue heere þank of but not to entertain merely for worldly credit.
 worldly manhed. þey shulden kepe pore pilgryms for tyme
 þat þei hadden wher-of, & fede hem bi apostlis fode & not bi
 deyntees for worldly worchip. & þis shulde teche siche
 persones to take more hede to þer paryȝshis to fede her soulis
 goostly, al ȝif þey shulden do þis sumtyme. & þis were
 litil charite in persouns to spare hem silf for a nyȝt for to
 helpe þer euene cristen, whanne þey sawen þat þei hadden
 nede; & algatis to take siche gestis þat helden hem payed
 wiþ siche godis, & weren of þe noumbre of hem þat poul
 biddith to holde hem payed.

Capitulum 5^m.

Pastors should
live on the alms
of their flock.

Christ lived on
alms.
Luke viii. [3.]

Why should a
prelate shame to
do likewise?

To live on alms is
the most perfect
life;

it avoids strife
and cursing.

In teaching their
flocks they give
more than they
receive.

Acts xx. [35.]

It makes the
flock contribute
of free will,

[Philemon v. 15.]
*[p. 4 MS.]

and is a spur for
good to the pre-
lates.

God will have
men deal only in
things that can
be valued.

of þis may men se ouer þat alle herdis of crist shulden lyue
of þe almes of sheep þat þey techen. for ȝif þey han rentis
bifore or worldly richees, þei shulden leue hem bifore
or lyue on hem bi-syde þer sheep. & þus apostlis leften þer
godis whanne þey weren chosun to cristis disciplis. for ech
persoun shulde bi charite sue crist as lichy as he myȝte, but
crist lyuede of almes of þe puple þat he tauȝte; why shulde
a prelat shame to lyue þus on siche almes? þe gospel of luk
seiþ hou marye maudelen & cusees wif & many oþere mynys-
triden to crist of þe godis þat weren herne; & þus as crist
was nedy for men, so he wolde take of þer almes; hou shulde
a prelat shame to take þus godis of pore men? Also ech
prelat shulde lyue moost parfit lif & moost sikire, but it is
more parfit & sikire to lyue on siche almes þan bi ony oþer
maner, & þerfore prelatis shulden mekely holde hem payed of
þis title. ȝif þei hadden bi anticristis lawe weye to plete for
þes godis, þey wolden stryue & curse for hem & wrongly
disturble þer sugetis, & þus to haue bi titel of almes as crist
hadde is more worchipful, for lawe of þe lord is betere, & þus
prestis ben more lik to crist. & þus prelatis shulden bi title
of almes ȝyue lore & leding to þer sugetis; & siþen þis ȝyuyng
is myche betere þan bodily ȝyuyng þat þe puple ȝyueþ, it is
more worchipful to prelatis to ȝyue þus goostly almes þan to
take bodily almes, þat is so litil & so myche dette, & herfore
seiþ poul soþely þat it is more blessid *condicioun* for to ȝyue
betere þing þan to take þing lesse worþ. & þus ȝif title of
almes renne bi-twixe þis herde & his sheep, it is more willeful
to þes sheep & so more meedeful to hem, & herfore wolde
poul take willefully þe ȝifte þat philemon shulde *ȝyue hym.
& on þe toþer syde anentis þe herde it turneþ hym to more
mekenesse, & stirih hym by skyle & shame to ȝyue aȝen betere
ȝifte. Also god is so skileful þat he wole not þat men
chaffere but in þingis whoos valu þei knowen; but lore &

preyours of prestis may not be taxid bi mannus wit, & þerfore god wolde not þat it were seld bi dymes ne offeringis. & þerfore seiþ crist in matheus gospel to his disciplis þat techen þe puple: “þee token frely þoure wit of god, & þyue þee it frely to þe puple.” & þis sentense shulden prestis take as a reule of bileue, for myche wit & myche strengþe ben in goddis reules þat semen rude.

Teaching and prayer have no price.

Matt. x. [8.]

Capitulum 6^m.

o f þis it semyþ to many men þat neþer persoun ne prelat shulde wringe out þe godis of his sugetis bi cursis ne worldly ple. for þey ben pure almes as we supposen, on which almes shulde renne no ple; for þei shulden be willeful & þouyn wiþ-oute resoun of mannus dette. Also crist & his apostlis neþer cursiden ne pletiden for þer dette, & þey shulden be ensauple to vs; why shulden we curse or plete for hem? & in tokene here-of god telde in his newe lawe litil or nouȝt of þyuyng of dymes. & it semyþ to trewe men þat god wolde þat dymes weren partid bi-twixe prestis & oþere pore men þat weren feble, lame or blynd. & therfore telliþ luk in his gospel hou crist cam þoruȝ samary wiþ his disciplis, & þey wolden neþer þyue fode ne herbore for hym & hise; & ioon & iames axiden of crist þat fier shulde come doun fro heuene & destrie hem, as ely dide; but crist answeride to þes apostlis & tauȝte þat he wolde not curse þus: “þee witen not,” seiþ crist, “whoos spiritis þee ben, & hou y loue mekenesse & paciense; for mannus sone cam not in-to þis world to lese mennus soulis but to saue hem.” & iurisdiccoun of crist was largere & freere þan þe popis. siþen crist wolde not curse for þes wrongis, & þei weren more þan oure wrongis, bi what lawe shulden we haue title to curse þus for oure lesse wrongis? no drede crist hadde more riȝt to þes dymes þan ony cristen-man may haue to dymes or to offeringis or to ony good by mannus lawe; & siþen crist tauȝte in þis dede not to plete for

Priests should not curse or go to law for money.

Christ and his apostles never did this.

Little or nothing said of tithes in New Testament.

Luke ix.
Christ and the Samaritans.

Our wrongs less than Christ's.

his dette, why shulden not prestis sue crist heere, siþen cristis dedis ben myrour to hem?

*[p. 4b MS.]

& ȝif þey taken of þe olde lawe þat dymes ben *due vn-to prestis, myche more in þe newe lawe whanne prestis ben more worþy bi crist. soþ it is þat dymes weren due to prestis in þe olde lawe, but þey weren holdun to do aȝen sleying of beestis & hard seruyss. but god forbede þat oure prelatiſ obliſche hem to trauele þus, for þanne þei abiden aȝenus bileue, sleying of crist þat was þanne figurid.

Tithes were due to priests in the old law, but they had to work in return.

We should not go to law except out of charity.

Also no man shulde plete an oþer, & algatis þe curat his sheep, but for charite to þe pleted man; siþen poul seiþ þat alle oure dedis shulden be don in charite, ȝe þat shulde strecche to oure enemyes. & ȝif þou seyst þat charite moueþ þee to plete þus for dymes, forȝyue þou hem as crist dide; for þat is more liȝt & of more loue. & ȝif a man plete in goddis cause & alegge þat þou hast synned in doying of þyn herdis offiss, in þingis þat þou shuldist ȝyue þi sheep; no drede þou maist not answeere heere ne iustefie þy part bi goddis lawe. & þus in þe newe lawe siþen prestis bi-gunnen to plete þus, þei han left to do þer offiss, as þei leften in þe olde lawe; & so in-stode of sicke plees þe curat shulde moue his sheep bi paciense & oþere vertues & trewe trauel in his offiss. & ȝif þis wole not moue þe puple to ȝyue hym þingis þat ben nedeful, turne þis prelat to oþer puple; for so dide crist, & god failiþ not; or ellis lyue he on his bodily trauel or oþere mennus almes as poul dide.

A priest to move his flock to provide for him by patience and good life.

Capitulum 7^m.

If a prelate bid a parson to collect money wrongfully, the parson must refuse,

of þis ground may men se ouer, þat ȝif an hye prelat charge a persoun to ȝyue hym godis þat is not groundid bi lawe of god for to ȝyue, þys persoun shulde not ȝyue þes godis, neþer for cursing ne oþere censuris. for a man shulde not asente to synne for noþing as it is seyð; & no drede þis persoun assentide to þe wrong of his prelat aboue, whanne he ȝyueþ

or he assents to wrong.

þus pore mennus godis bi ȝifte þat goddis lawe techiþ not. for al treuþe is in goddis lawe, & dettis feyned wiþ-uten it ben pure robbery of þe puple; but who shulde not aȝen-stonde þis?

& it is all oon to an hye prelat to curse þis persoun for þis cause & to seye: “robbe þou pore men, & take of hem so myche good, & y shal mayntene þi robbery, & ellis y shal curse þee in þyn hed & suspende þee & þe puple þat þey here not goddis seruys.” Who wolde not fle fro sicche spuyling for sicche feyned censuris of prelatis? but heere haþ þe fend shapun a sharp cautel to strengþen þis robbery. þey wolen bi process of þer lawe priue a man of his benefiss & putte in an-oþer fend þat wole blely robbe pore men & þus ȝyue þis robbery to þis prelat of anticrist. & þis astonyeþ many persouns to stonde for riȝt aȝenus þe fend. but heere shulden alle þre *partis of þe chirche helpe ech oþer aȝenus þe deucl, & wite wel first þat suche cursing or censuris ben vnskeful; & so men shulden quenche hem siþ þei ben aȝenus goddis lawe. & trewe persouns wiþ þer pariȝschis shulden not lette for sicche manass to stonde algatis for þis treuþe, neþer for dispensis ne peyne; for siþen persouns shulden haue no godis to ȝyue þer prelatis but of þer sheep, what persoun shulde for al þis world make þis robbing of pore men? & ȝif manye wolden holde togedere in þis bileue aȝenus þe fend, it were a triacle aȝenus venym þat emperour prelatis sowen in þe folc. for no drede neþer persouns ne puple shulden assente herto for ony man. & þanne bishops & archidekenes wiþ þer officials & denes shulden not amersy pore men; for þis is worse þan comyn robberye, siþen ipocrisie is feyned ouer wrong-taking of þes godis. a prest shulde raþere leue þis offiss & suffere deþ or he assentide by ony of sixe maner of consentis to sicche piling of pore men. for it is in many caasis as myche synne to rob a wedewe or a pore fadirles child of a peny or an halpeny as it were to robbe a riche man of an hundrid markis worþ godis. & no drede sicche cowarde prestis ben cause of al sicche spuyling; & it is shewid by þis þefte þat þei louen more þer shepis godis þan þey don heelp of þer soule, & þanne þay

A prelate might as well bid him go rob at once.

Good men are deprived, and the benefices given to robbers.

*[p. 5 MS.] All three parts of the Church should join to resist this, and disregard curses and censures.

Archdeacons fine poor men.

Six ways of consent.

faylen of gode herdis, & ben hirid hynes or woluyes, & þe puple shulde crye out on siche.

Capitulum 8^m.

Parishioners
should withdraw
tithes from priests
that fail in their
office.

To pay them is
assenting to sin.

2 John [10].

We are not to
greet an evilman,
much less give
him alms.

Analogy from
Canon Law.

*[p. 5b MS.]

[1 Cor. v. 11.]

In giving goods
to bad priests you
help them to do
harm.

The devil says
people may not
judge their pre-
lates.

cristenmen of þis ground þenken þat pariȝschens shulden drawe fro persouns offeringis & dymes & opere godis whanne þey faylen opynly in þer offiss, for siche assent is to blame þat nurship persouns in siche synne. but what meede were it to pariȝshens to ȝyue her almes to siche a prelat to werre aȝenus crist & his chirche & mayntene þe fendis part aȝenus crist? siþen crist haþ tauȝt cristenmen hou þey shulden wisely do þer almes; not aȝenus þer oune hed, ne aȝenus þer modir hooly chirche. Also bileue in ioons epistle techiþ þat men shulden not grete siche; but it is more to ȝyue hem almes þan to grete hem bi nakid word; myche more men shulden not grete hem wiþ almes, but fle fro hem as fro false prophetis. Also þe popis lawe biddiþ men to not here þe massis of prestis þat ben comyn lechours. þanne ȝif prestis ben in more synne þat is more knowun to þe puple, þey shulden not take þes prestis seruyss; hou shulden þey herfore ȝyue hem almes? Also poul *biddiþ drawe men to dele not wiþ siche men þat ben contrarie to goddis lawe, but sich prestis ben contrarie to god & to his puple as wolues of raueyn; hou shulden men þanne ȝyue hem godis to peruerte so myche puple? for what euere þei don, in masse or mateyns or oper dedis of þer lif, þey harmen hem silf & þer pariȝs & oper puple¹ þat is aboute hem. & bi þe same skile [they are] foolis þat ȝyuen þer godis as almes to siche prelatis; for siche ȝifte is not almes but ȝifte of helle to strengþe þe fend. & þe fend shulde shame heere to seye þat pariȝschens shulden not iuge of þe lif of þer prelat wheþer þat he be good or yuel; for þey shulden iuge to sue hym in as myche as he sueþ crist. & þus siþ crist biddiþ

¹ MS. pupple.

iuge his werkis, why shulden not men iuge & fle false *prelatis*? it is al oon to seye þis feynyng & to lette men to fle fro fendis & blesse hem fro þer wickid werkis, but teche men to assente to hem. lord, siþ crist biddiþ men þat þey shulden not trowe to hym but ȝif he dide his fadirs werkis, what priuylegie haþ anticrist heere þat men shulden trowe & susteyne hym in doying of þe deuels werkis? Also crist techiþ in þe gospel þat ȝif salt vanyȝsche away it is not worþ aftir but to be castun out & be defoulid of men; & þis salt shulde be þes *prelatis*. lord, wher þis casting out & þis defouling þat crist spekiþ of be ȝyuyng of godis to siche curatis, & mayntenynge of hem in þis staat. lord, siþen men doren not mayntene an opyn traytour of þe kyng, hou doren þey mayntene a more traytour & more harmful of ihesu crist? þe harme þat wolde sue of þis lore semyþ to stonde in þis good, þat prestis shulden shewe bi þer werkis þat þey weren worþy to be helpid; but þis lore is tauȝt of crist, & blessid be þe weye þat techiþ it. ȝif men iugen vndiscretly þey don hem more harm þan prestis, for laste prestis in vertuous lif & drede þey not of sustenaunse.

Christ tells us not to believe in him unless he does his father's works.

Matt. v. [13.]

They are the salt that has lost his savour.

If men judge wrongly, they do more harm to themselves than to the priest.

Capitulum 9^m.

þ is sentense of almes shulde strecche to plasis þat han chirchis appropriid; as ben munkis & chanouns & secular collegies. þer ben þre maner of collegies þat vsen þis craft of appropriing. þe firste ben cathedral chirchis þat han pro-uendris appropriid to hem; þe secounde ben chapels of prinsis þat han chirchis more appropriid; þe þridde ben collegies of studies þat vsen þis same craft; bi þes may men knowe opere þat han appropriing of chirchis. For alle acorden in þis, þat þey han almes of pariȝschens & *ȝit dwellen not on þe pariȝs as herdis for to teche hem; & þey blasfemen in god. for þey moten nedis seye þat god ordeynede þis; & siþ no cause is of þis almes, þei seyen þat god shoop þis wiþ-oute cause. Also

Appropriations to colleges.

Different kinds of colleges.

All agree in taking alms and not residing.
*[p. 6 MS.]

god haþ ordeyned heere in erþe almes to be delid as he deliþ reyn; but he deliþ reyn as it is nede, bi smalle dropis where erþe is drye; hou shameþ not anticrist heere to make sicke dichis & waste drye erþe? no drede he is an yuel god, þat

They say that they pray for their parishioners and so profit them. Their prayer is worth little.

þus reuersiþ goddis ordeynaunse. & ȝif sicke collegies feynen þat þey preyen & oþere weyes profiten to þer pariȝschis, men shulden not þus chaffere wiþ preyere; for þey witen nere wher þey ben dampnyd. & preyours of sicke fendis is litil worþ, ȝe to hemsilf, hou feden þey sheep? Also almes shulde be fre & discreet as goddis lawe techiþ, for ellis it were not meedeful,

Why should a poor man have his money taken to support a 'Cain's castle'?

& god ȝaue no leue to do it; what meede shal a pore man haue þat he sufferiþ aȝenus his wille his almes be borun to cayms castel to fede a floc of anticristis? certis þey don þes pariȝschis no good ne to general hooly chirche, but ȝif þei don good as þe fend þat reuersiþ goddis ordenaunse. men shulden seke ground of sicke collegies, wheþer god haþ ordeyned hem to be, & þe floc fed bi hem þat ben so fer & so lewid. & þus

These colleges want to find another way to heaven than Christ's.

þes nouelries of collegies semen to tempte crist as þe fend, for þey gon not to heuene bi greesis þat god haþ ordeyned to lede þidur, but þey wolen fle bi þe fendis craft &

Christ bade his shepherds live among their sheep and teach them;

leeue þe weye þat crist haþ set. crist ordeynede þat his herdis shulden dwelle wisely vpon his sheep, & teche hem boþe bi lif & word hou þey shulden lyue to come to

Antichrist tells them to live afar and not teach.

heuene; but anticrist castiþ an-oþer gile, þat his herdis dwelle afer in castels & be doup of lore of lif & lore of word to helpe þer sheep, & so it is nedeful þat þe puple be disseyued in body & soule. þey ben disseyued in þer body, for þei ben robbid of bodili good & it is clepid almes bi ipocrisie. & þus þey ben goostly disseyued, boþe for hem wantiþ teching to wende to heuene bi cristis weye, & for þey ben led to helle bi errour of þe fendis weye. crist seiþ þat he is weye, & grounde þou þis apropring in crist, for ȝif crist grounde it not, it is þe brode weye to helle; it is a newe foundun weye

*[p. 6b MS.]

*for sutilte aȝenus charite, but þe kyngis weye is crist þat lediþ surely to heuene.

Capitulum 10^m.

A nt þus seyn summen heere þat, as lordis of þe world shulden
 wiþdrawe þer lordchip fro clerkis dowid aȝenus goddis
 lawe, so comyns of þe pariȝs shulden wiþdrawe þer almes Commons should
withdraw their
alms from priests
wrongly en-
dowed.
 & ȝyue it aftir þe lore of crist, for ellis þey reuersiden crist &
 dispisiden hym & chosun þe fend. & ȝif a prelat, as pope or
 bishop, streyne þe puple aȝenus þer wille to ȝyue þer almes to
 siche plasis, certis þei ben þe fendis proctours. for crist
 koude neuere make an almes þing þat were not willeful to
 men & he koude not ordeyne siche buschementis to robbe men
 & to wounde hem. þes men ben woundid in soule þat ben
 smytun wiþ errour of vertues; & þus can anticrist bi many
 mylis sende his arowis to wounde þe puple, & moue con-
 sciense of men þat þey leeue goddis lore & take þe lore þat þe
 pope biddiþ, as ȝif þe pope were hyed ouer crist. for crist Christ bids men
do alms to the
poor and weak,
 biddiþ men þus to do almes to pore feble & lame & blynd,
 but anticrist biddiþ to leeue þis, and to do it to stronge & idil Antichrist to
strong idlers.
 men, þat ben nurschid in þe fendis nest to be an oost aȝenus
 crist. Also pride & coueytise of myȝti men of þe world
 weren ground of siche nestis wiþouten autorite of crist; &
 þus men moten nedis assente to þe fend aȝenus crist þat
 assenten to siche propring of chirchis bisyde cristis leeue, for
 crist seiþ þat who so is not wiþ hym he mut nedis be aȝenus
 hym. & þus coueytise of popis & bishops assentiþ to siche
 appropriingis, & coueytise of þer messangeres þat ben hirid to
 helpe hem; & pride of men of þe world þat wolen make hem
 siche poondis, is an oþer rote of consense aȝenus crist lord of
 þis world. but ech man shulde þenke wisely þat his oune Menshould think
it enough to
answer for their
own sins, with-
out sharing other
people's.
 synne is to myche, al ȝif he procure not to be parsener of
 oþere mennus synnes bi consent. & þis consent of myȝti men
 bi strengþe & cautels of þe fend haþ maistry of pore sheep of
 crist, & autorisiþ siche wrongis in erþe. Also crist techiþ in
 þe pater noster to preye god to ȝyue vs oure breed, & it We must make
'our daily bread'
ours by true ser-
vice.
 shulde be maad oure breed bi oure trewe seruuyss þat god

These men doing
no service make
their prayers in
vain.

[2 Thess. iii. 10.]

*[p. 7 MS.]

One hidden error
brings in more
and worse.

biddiþ; but al þes þat han chirchis aproprid faylen of þis trewe seruyss herfore, & þus þei ben vnhabable to preye, but preyen aȝen þer oune hed. & to þis purpos spekiþ poul, þat þis man þat traueliþ not ete he not; for ȝif he dide, he eet as a priue þef mete of oþere pore men. siche sutiltees of priue resouns þat ben hid in goddis lawe shulden moue men on goddis syde to holde cristis ordenaunse in his boundis; for certis a priuey errour & an hid wole bringe in *a grettere errour, as o defaute þat is contynued wolle bringe in a more defaute. as defaute of keping of o pariȝs wole turne hem to þe fendis children, & þey wolen infecte cuntreys, & cuntreys wolen infecte reumes; & þus it falliþ to kyngis & bischops to stoppe þis errour for more perel.

Capitulum 11^m.

b ut heere moueþ þe fend men to feyne falsly aȝenus treuþe. many men taken as bileue þat þei ben lordis of þer oune godis, & þanne it is leeuful to hem to do þer almes where euere þey wolen. but where shulden þey do þer almes but to ȝyue þer dymes & þer offeringis, & to siche curatis þat þe pope & bischops lymiten hem, for ellis myȝte a man be dampnyd wiþ-outen ony defaute of hym; for hou shulde a lewid man do but as his prelat techiþ hym?

Men think that
they may do as
they will with
their own.

How can they
give better than
as the Pope tells
them?

Every man should
learn inwardly
from God the
great articles of
belief.

Heere men seyn bi goddis lore þat ech man þat haþ discrecioun shulde be tauȝt wiþ-ynne bi god of grete articlis of bileue; but oon article of bileue next aftir þe hooly goost is to trowe hooly chirche þat is cristis spouse & oure modir. & þis is a foul errour to take þe spouse of þe fend & worchipe here as cristis spouse boþe in word & in dede. we may not ȝit wite for certeyn which persone is of cristis spouse of alle þe men þat wandren heere, but we may gesse & þat is ynow. As we gessen þat þis man þat holdiþ wel cristis lawe is a leme of hooly chirche, þe which chirche is oure modir, So we gessen of an-oþer man þat reuersiþ cristis lawe, þat he is a leme of þe fend & no part of hooly chirche; & we shulden

We cannot know
who is a member
of the true
Church, but we
may guess.

not ȝyue dymes ne offeringis to sicke men as to hooly chirche,
 as we shulden not loute þe fend al ȝif he shewide hym in
 ymage of crist. & herfore crist & his apostlis weren not
 gredy of worldly godis, but helden hem payed of fode &
 hiling, & so don prestis of cristis chirche. & þus siþ crist is
 cheef lord, men moten dispende cristis godis on þat maner þat
 crist haþ lymtyed, & not hou euere a man wole, & it is not
 ynow to do good but ȝif a man do it wel. for þe gospel of
 ioon telliþ þat crist seiþ of summe foolis þat þei shulen deme
 to obesche to god in pur-suyng of his apostlis; as poul wente
 þat he dide wel to drawe cristenmen to ierusalem. & þus it
 is nyȝ þe perel to ȝyue bodily almes to men but ȝif men
 knowen hem betere, & þanne in litil quantite. & herfore
 crist tauȝte not his apostlis to bisie hem abou*te sicke almes
 but aboute goostly almes, þat is preching of þe gospel; but
 bodily almes is brouȝt yn bi freris & opere stronge beggeres.
 & þes fendis clerkis feynen almes whanne it is noon almes but
 synne. & þus errour in bileue, to trowe to þe pope & to
 bischops as men shulden trowe goddis lawe, makip many
 men blamed of god. for men shulden trowe to þes prelatis
 aftir þer dedis groundid in goddis lawe; but men shulden
 trowe to cristis lawe ouer þis as bileue. but ȝit þe fend
 disseyueþ men þat þey ȝyuen not þis almes vnto ioon or to
 robert, but to god & in his name bi good entent, & þat is
 ynow; for a man shulde paye his dette to hym þat is traytour
 to god. Heere is myche for to seye, for þe fend takiþ fals
 þat foolis ȝyuen not þer almes to robert þat is a leme of þe
 fend. & ȝif þei ȝyuen þis þus to god, þei ȝyuen it on an yuel
 maner; but men witen þat it is dampnable to ȝyue to god þer
 seruyss yuele as ech fend þat is in helle ȝyueþ to god his
 dampnyng. & þus men moten riȝte þer entent, & ȝyue
 discretly goddis godis, for wenyng to do wel in many caasis
 is not ynow. & as anentis worldly dette þer is an-opere resoun
 þer-of; for a man may meedefully ȝyue it to hym þat shal
 aftir be dampnyd; for þis is no willeful almes but ȝilding of
 dette bi mannis lawe.

We must spend
 the goods, of
 which Christ is
 chief lord, as he
 has ordered.

It is not enough
 to mean to do
 right.

[John xvi. 2.]

So did Paul when
 he persecuted.

*[p. 7b MS.]

The fiend says
 that men give
 their alms to God,
 not to John or
 Robert,

and that debts
 must be paid
 to bad men.

Men must not do
 an evil service to
 God.

Paying debts
 stands on another
 footing.

Capitulum 12^m.

Curates think }
that the Pope's
leave or privileges
may excuse them
from residence.

God will have
due service.

The Pope's bulls
can only make
him take a share
in the damnation.

*[p. 8 MS.]

Priests ought to
tell lords sharply
of their duty in
this matter.

The fiend says
that it is enough
to put in a vicar.

It were good to
have a vicar to
take the forfeited
alms.

it þe fend blyndiþ many curatis þat wenen þat þei ben not holdun to residense bi leue of þe pope or of þer bischop or of seculere lordis bi priuylegie, & þus þei taken fruytis of þer chirchis & seruen not þer puple þerfore. but heere trewe men shulden knowe þat neþer pope ne oþer man haþ power to kepe a man in his benefiss & to do nouzt þerfore; for god wole not do þis dede but axiþ due seruys for þis offiss. & as an ymage is not þe man al ȝif it be lik to hym, so siche leue of a persoun makip hym not herde but wolf to god; & ȝif an herde haue bullis of þe pope þat he dispensiþ heere wiþ hym, alle siche bullis excusen not bifore þe iugement of god; but þey accusen more þe pope to take part of mennus dampnyng þat tristen so myche in þe popis bullis more þan in lawe or skile of god. & bi þe same skile bischops leue, þat is of a persoun, excusiþ hem not bifore god, but te[llip]¹ hou þey bien & sillen þer peyne; þis chaffere pas[sip]¹ symonye, for it is more nyȝ to wrong to ȝyue a man leue for money to serue not god but to serue þe fend. For certis no man may haue þis power, *ȝe not anticrist hym silf. & as anentis seculer lordis, as kyngis & prinsis & oþere lordis, men shulden sharply telle to hem þat þei han no power aȝenus god, but þei moten nedis for siche dedis þat men clepen priuelegies dampne hem silf, wiþ þes persouns þat þey letten fro goddis offiss. & wolde god þat trewe prestis wolden telle sharply þis perel to lordis; for man myȝte not more opynly bicom traytour to his god þan to drawe his knyȝtes fro his seruys, & bringe in fendis & sle his soulis. but ȝit þe fend haþ founden cautels to bringe in vikeris in persouns stede, & bi colour of siche vikeris he seiþ þat propring of chirchis is leueful, & noun residense is excusid bi siche a viker þat holdiþ his stede. Heere men þenken þat it were good to haue a viker þat were nedy to take bodily almes of men whanne þe persoun trauelide

¹ Illegible from the margin being rubbed.

not þerfore; but þey ben not in þis þer vikeris, but in bodily trauel & spuyling of men. but boþe þis persoun & þis viker moten be punyʒshid for þer trespas, siþ ech man is holdun to serue god bi al þe power þat he haþ; for ʒif þis viker myʒte serue ynow, what nede were it of sicke a persoun? certis but to spuyle þe pore folc, & make more synne in hooly chirche. & bringing in of sicke vikeris, þat oftetye ben vnhablerdis, makip hem pore & nedy, & sharpip hem to spuyle pore puple; & it makip persouns aboue more hardy to walowe in synne, & many tymes þei ben vnhabler to haue trewely þe name of curat. & sicke false names þat ben þus feyned excusen not bifore crist, siþ crist is þe firste treuþe & þe firste resoun of alle þingis. We graunte wel þat it were good many prestis to haue felowis in keping of a floce, oon to do o þing, an-oþer an-oþer; as oon to trauele bodily in mynistring of sacramentis, an-oþer to trauele in preching & oþer teching of þe puple; but loke þat þes boþe be hooly & lyue in pouert as apostlis diden & ech of hem helpe mekely oþer as felowis drawinge in goddis ʒoc. but þis axip residense on sheep þat man is herde of. god may not be bigilid bi sicke names & excusing, for þis lord wole rikene wiþ þes seruauentis fully aftir þat resoun axip. ʒif þou feynest þee an ordre þat þou preyest & þenkist on god, & þerwiþ þou hast cure bi þy viker þat kepiþ þe chirche, loke þat þou bere not falsly þe name, but lyue in pouert as baptist dide, not in hye castels of caym & lustful fode as boris in sty; *for preysours þat sicke booris maken don to many more harm þan good. for bi þis fallas myʒte a fend or a souter be an herde ouer a þousynd men in englond & excuse residense bi a fool.

If the vicar can do the work, what need of the parson?

Vicars are often unfit.

A priest may have a fellow to help him,

but they should both reside.

Do not belong to an order under pretence of praying,

and live like a boar in a sty.
* [p. 8b MS.]

Capitulum 13^m.

ʒ it argueþ þe fend to colour sicke appropriingis, þey ben con-fermed of þe pope & approuyd of þe court, who may impungne þis dede. but ʒif he impungne þe pope; & of þis it wolde sue þat þe pope & hise ben opyn heretikis, but where were þis fiʒtinge chirche ʒif þis were soþ of þe pope, ʒif þe

Antichrist argues that these appropriations are approved by the Pope and his court.

pope & alle his clerkis weren dyuydid fro cristis chirche. for holding of cristis religioun shulde stonde moost in þe clergie, & algatis in þes newe ordris as ben freris, munkis & chanouns.

The Pope's approval does not show a thing to be right.

heere seyen trewe men in god more hardily þan þey weren wont þat þis is a lewid skile, ȝif þe pope approue þis þing þanne þis þing mut nedis be trewe, for herby þe *contrarye* is þe more licly. for siþ þe pope is more tempted þan oþere men & more led bi þe fend, it semyþ bi þe popis *confermyng* þat þis is þe fendis werk. & heere is more coloure in þis resoun þan in resouns þat aristotle telliþ þat ȝif a man haue a kempt hed þanne he is a leccherous man. sumtyme it may falle so & sumtyme þe *contrarye* may falle, as þe pope may sumtyme falle on þe soþe & sumtyme discorde þerfro, as he

The Pope may approve fighting in his cause.

may bi fauoure or money approue fȝting of prestis & ful asoyling of men þat fȝten faste in his cause. but trowe we herfore þat god wole folde fro riȝtwesnesse of his lawe? for god is moost mersiful al ȝif he sufferȝ sicke blasfemyes, & þus he wolde þat mersy were in men & forȝyuenesse of þer wrongis; & not þat men shulden fȝte to-gidere for sicke lordchip of *anticrist*. ȝif it be treuþe of goddis lawe god in þat confermeþ it, & ȝif it be falsed aȝenus god, ȝit it is treuþe as austyn seiþ, & so god confermeþ it to be punyȝschid bi his wille; but þe fend is autour þer-of & stiriþ men to trowe to

Men that know the Pope's errors should speak of them.

it. & þus men þat han kunnyng & knowen þe errours of þe pope shulden wiþ mekenesse & obediense telle þes errouris to hym & oþere. For þus dide poul for liȝt synne þat petre did aȝen þe chirche, & ellis men loueden not þe pope ne iesu crist ne his chirche. þus bi cautels of þe fend is hate turnyd to name of loue & loue turnyd to name

*[p. 9 MS.]

The only power the Pope has is to edify men by God's law.

of hate, * & þus ben many men disseyued. & men trowen as bileue þat þe pope haþ no power but to edifie þe chirche bi þe lawe þat god haþ ȝouyn; for poul seiþ he haþ noon oþer, & he hadde as myche as þe pope. & siþ þer is no power but of god, & god ȝyueþ no power to destrie his spouse; neþer pope ne oþer man haþ power but to helpe þe chirche bi goddis lawe. & þus feynyng of *anticristis* powere, þat is fals aȝenus þis

treuþe, comeþ of þe fadir of lesingis & disseyueþ many men.

& as anentis heresies of þe pope & his clerkis supposen many trewe men þat he & hise ben heretikis, for þei holden aȝenus goddis lawe worldly lordchipis in prestis hondis, & þis is aȝenus crist & his lawe, & maynteynen¹ wrong aȝenus worldly lordis. crist wole punyȝsche þis heresie & make it more knowun her-aftir, al ȝif anticrist & hise seyn nou þat noone ben heretikis but þei þat seyn þus. mennus diffynyng of heresie is litil worþ but to blame men þat don & speken aȝenus goddis lawe, for siche ben mooste heretikis. & þus appropriing of chirchis, newe brouȝt in bi þe fend, soweþ symonye & lesingis to make þis propring to be grauntid. & þus algatis ben pore men robbid of worldly godis & goostly help, & þe fend haþ an entre to ouercome helples men, as ben men of siche pariȝschis & oþere þat assenten herto.

The Pope and his are heretics, since they hold property against God's law.

Evils brought in by appropriations.

Capitulum 14^m.

ȝ it argueþ þe fend þat bi þis foly þat heere is spokun alle colleges þat ben in studies shulden be destried; but where were þanne cristendom? for ȝif filosofie & dyuynite wantiden in þe reume of englond, where were þanne bileue of men or goddis lawe in englond? for colleges in oxneford & caumbrige ben foundid on siche appropriingis, & collegians wenden out & prechen & quykenen many partis of englond; & degre takun in scole makip goddis word more acceptable, & þe puple trowip betere þerto whanne it is seyd of a maistir.

The devil argues that if appropriations are taken from the colleges, learning will perish.

heere men seyn þat many goodis han comun bifore of siche studies, but neuere so myche siþen colleges weren dowid as dide bifore þer rentis weren proprid; & þerfore it were good þat þes studies & colleges þat ben in hem stoden in as myche as þei acorden to goddis lawe & lyuen wel, & as myche as þei discorden fro cristis lawe þat þey weren mendid. but siþ þat

Studies were carried on before colleges were endowed.

¹ mayntenyd MS.

The apostles took no degree,
Matt. xxiii.
and Christ forbade them to be called 'Master.'

*[p. 9b MS.]

Some good comes out of all evil.

Adam and Eve did good in sinning.

Some priests that have not been at college are better than some that have.

Schoolmen work to get reputation.

Money wasted at inceptions.

apostlis token no siche degre & crist forfendide hem to be clepid maystris, it semeþ þat þis heþen maner brouzt in in studies discordiþ fro þe gospel; & as preching of apostlis was betere þan is preching of þes maystris, so prestis wiþ-oute degre of scole may profite more þan don þes maystris. *take þe good fro þe yuel, & holde þe good & leeue þe yuel; & moue it not þee þat of siche yuel comeþ myche good to men & reumes, for god wole sufferē noon yuel be don but ȝif good come þerof. & þus ȝif comyng of good þat springiþ of yuel bi goddis grace shulde moue men to do þat yuel, & continue it & holde it, ech yuel shulde be don & a man shulde fle noon yuel; for yuel of fendis doiþ myche good, as adam & eue diden good in synnyng, but it was don on yuel maner & þerfore þe maner shoulde be fled. & þus ȝif dyuynite were lernd on þat maner þat apostlis diden, it shulde profite myche more þan it doiþ nou bi staat of scole, as prestis nou wiþ-oute siche staat profiten more þan men of siche staat; & contynue þey in good lif & in boundis of goddis lawe, & þis shal make þe folc more trowe þan doiþ degre takun in scole. & manye sciensis ben vsid in scole þat profiten not to goddis lawe, but tarien & letten fro þis lawe, as poul techiþ opynly. & þus mannus lawe tauȝt in scolis lettiþ goddis lawe to growe, & no drede god is þat maistre þat wole teche nou as redily as he wolde bifore þis tyme, ȝif prestis lif be shapun þerto. & þat semyþ no good mene to passe ouer cristis ordenaunse & his lawe for good þat god sendiþ herof, for þanne men shulden [not] drede to synne. & þus men of scole trauelen veynly for to gete newe sutiltees, & to magnefie þer name for þer worchip & þer wynnynge, & þe profit of hooly chirche bi þis weye is put abac. & in making of þes maystris ben pore mennus godis ofte wasted, & þe kyng of pride is hied & cristis mekenesse is put bihynde. many siche synnes þat stiren to stryues comen of siche partis in studies; & þus bi propring of chirchis comeþ riȝtly noon help to þe chirche.

Capitulum 15^m.

a nt heere þe freris wiþ þer fautours seyn þat it is heresye
to write þus goddis lawe in english, & make it knowun

Friars say it is heresy to translate the Bible.

to lewid men. & fourty signes þat þey bringen forto
shewe an heretik ben not worþy to reherse, for nouȝt groundiþ
hem but nygromansye.

They give forty signs to know a heretic.

it semyþ first þat þe wit of goddis lawe shulde be tauȝt
in þat tunge þat is more knowun, for þis wit is goddis word.

God's word should be taught in the tongue known to the people.

whanne crist seiþ in þe gospel þat boþe heuene & erþe shulen
passe but his wordis shulen not passe, he vndirstondith bi
his woordis hiȝ wit. & þus goddis wit is hooly writ, þat

may on no maner be fals. Also þe hooly gost ȝaf to apostlis
wit at wit-sunday for to knowe al maner langagis to teche

The Apostles at Pentecost had the gift of tongues.

þe puple goddis lawe þerby; & so god wolde þat þe puple
were tauȝt goddis lawe in dyuerse tungis; but what *man *
on goddis half shulde reuerse goddis ordenaunse & his wille?

[p. 10 MS.]

& for þis cause seynt ierom trauelide & translatide þe bible
fro dyuerse tungis into lateyn þat it myȝte be aftir translatid

St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin.

to oþere tungis. & þus crist & his apostlis tauȝten þe puple in
þat tunge þat was moost knowun to þe puple; why shulden
not men do nou so? & herfore autours of þe newe law,
þat weren apostlis of iesu crist, writen þer gospels in
dyuerse tungis þat weren more knowun to þe puple. Also

þe worþy reume of fraunse, not-wiþ-standinge alle lettingis,
haþ translatid þe bible & þe gospels wiþ oþere trewe sentensis
of doctours out of lateyn in-to freynsch, why shulden not
engliȝsche men do so? as lordis of englond han þe bible in
freynsch, so it were not aȝenus resoun þat þey hadden þe
same sentense in engliȝsch; for þus goddis lawe wolde be
betere knowun & more trowid for onehed of wit, & more

The French have a translation.

acord be bi-twixe reumes. & herfore freris han tauȝt in
englond þe paternoster in engliȝsch tunge, as men seyen in
þe pley of ȝork, & in many oþere cuntreys. siþen þe pater-
noster is part of matheus gospel, as clerkis knowen, why

Friars have taught the Pater-noster in English.

Why may not the rest of Matthew's gospel be Englished?

may not al be turnyd to engliſsch trewely, as is þis part? specialy siþen alle cristenmen, lerid & lewid, þat shulen be sauýd, moten algatis sue crist & knowe his lore & his lif.

Englishmen may learn Christ's law best in English.

but þe comyns of engliſschmen knowen it best in þer modir tunge, & þus it were al oon to lette sicke knowing of þe gospel & to lette engliſsch men to sue crist & come to heuene.

There may be faults in translation,

Wel y woot defaute may be in vntrewe translating, as myȝten haue be many defautis in turnyng fro ebreu in-to

so there may have been in the Latin version.

greu, & fro greu in-to lateyn, & from o langage in-to an- oþer. but lyue men good lif & studie many persones goddis

Let men study God's law, and correct the mistakes.

lawe; & whanne chaungyng of wit is foundun amende þey it as resoun wole. summen seyn þat freris trauelen & þer

Three reasons that actuate the friars.

fautours in þis cause for þre chesouns, þat y wole not aferme, but god woot wher þey ben soþe. first þey wolden be seun

1. They wish to be thought the only men who understand God's law.

so nedeful to þe engliſschmen of oure reume þat singulerly in her wit layȝ þe wit of goddis lawe, to telle þe puple goddis lawe on what maner euere þey wolden. & þe secound cause

2. They wish to keep back what they please of God's law.

herof is seyð to stonde in þis sentense; freris wolden lede þe puple in techinge hem goddis lawe & þus þei wolden teche sum, & sum hide, & docke sum. For þanne defautis in þer lif shulden be lesse knowun to þe puple, & goddis lawe shulde be vntreweliere knowun boþe bi clerkis & bi comyns.

3. They fear their faults will be seen when God's law is known.

þe þridde cause þat men asprien stondiþ in þis as þey seyn; alle þes newe ordris dreden hem þat þer synne shulde be

*[p. 106 MS.]

knowun, *& hou þei ben not groundid in god to come in-to þe chirche, & þus þey wolden not for drede þat goddis lawe were knowun in engliſsch, but þey myȝten putte heresye on men ȝif engliſsch toolde not what þey seyden. god moue lordis & bischops to stonde for knowing of his lawe.

Capitulum 16^{tum}.

Tithes are due to true priests.

i t were to speke ouer þis of dymes & of offeringis þat ben hire to prestis þat don trewely þer seruyss; & dymes ben clepid goddis part in goddis lawe for greet wit. many causis men tellen comynly why dymes ben clepid

goddis part. nyne partis ben of creaturis & god is in þe tenþe degre; & in tokene þat god is lord general ouer alle creaturis, men ȝyuen god þe tenþe part in tokene of his general lordchip. þe werkes of þe sixe dayes in whiche god made þe world holden sixe kyndis of þingis in þis ordre of ten; & ȝit þer ben nyne ordris of aungels, al ȝif þe firste bok of þe bible specifie not þes nyne ordris, as poul doiþ in his bokis. þe eyȝthe maner of creaturis ben comyn þingis þat god haþ maad, & hooly writ spekiþ of hem in many bokis of goddis lawe. þe nyneþe maner of creaturis, & þe hierste of alle opere, is þe manhed of crist: & on þis sueþ his godhed, & þis tenþe þing is hierst lord of al maner of creaturis. & god moueþ al maner of tungis to clepe þis firste noumbre of ten bi symple name & aftirward þei clepen it bi a gederid name; & þis may men se in many tungis. & þis mouyde men in many agis to paye to god þe tenþe part, so þat bi þis þey confessiden to hym þe generalte of his lordchip; & þis cause is ynow to moue men to paye dymes. but it were for-to wite whiche men shulden reseýue dymes. þe firste bok of þe olde lawe telliþ of abel & caym, hou þey brenten þer tyþis to god, & þe smoke wente up to heuene. & it is lichly þat þis maner lastide vn-to þe tyme of moyses; but god lymytide in moysees lawe þat prestis & dekenes shulden lyue on dymes, & semelily þis maner lastide vn-to þe comyng of crist. but nou in þe þridde tyme of grace prestis & prelati chalengen to hem dymes & mennus offeringis bi autorite of þe olde lawe, & þis semyþ skileful, so þat men trauele wel wiþ hem, for men shulden paye þer dymes ȝit as þey diden in þe olde lawe, but þey shulden not brenne hem nou, for þer ben many pore goddis seruauantis. & þus lawe & skile chacchiþ men to ȝyue to trewe prestis þes dymes, for þis were moost liȝt & resonable ȝif þat prestis lyuen wel. & men neden not to rikene heere hou ofte þe olde lawe biddiþ þat prestis shulden haue hem; but for crist & hise apostlis weren fewe & lyueden on litil almes, *y can-not se bi goddis lawe þat ne dymes may be partid among cristis pore men, þe whiche crist

Tithes are due to God as a sign of his universal lordship. Nine orders of creatures.

God is the tenth order. How language witnesses to this.

Tithes at first were burnt;

but in the time of Moses God appointed them to priests. This remains in the law of grace.

Men should pay tithes to priests if they live well.

But tithes may be * [p. 11 MS.] partly given to the poor.

Luke xiv. [13.] telliþ in þe gospel, as pore feble & pore lame & pore blynde. & prestis ben þe firste for þei shulden be pore as crist, & feble þey ben to do þer seruyss & to gete þer-wiþ fode & hiling. crist koude bi weye of myraclis & weye of almes gete ynow, but ȝit crist was pore & feble & figuride prestis aftir to come.

Capitulum 17^m.

i t were to shewe aftir þis þat þe lawe þat god ȝyueþ bi seynt poul his apostle in his writing to tymothe shulde not ceesse for oure taking of offeringis & dymes bi þe olde lawe. Seynt poul biddiþ to tymothe & rikeneþ hym silf as o man to whiche þat he spekiþ to, & ȝyueþ hem þis reule of god: “whanne we han fode & hiling, be we payed of þes þingis.” lord, siþ þis is a skileful reule þat goddis lawe ȝyueþ to prestis & clerkis, why shulden þey leue þis for a willeful chesing þat þey taken of þe olde lawe? specialy siþ þes two lawis acorden boþe in wordis & resoun þat prestis shulden lyue on dymes & be payed of fode & hiling. certis ȝif god wolde þat þe toon ceesside, we shulden not take þes two to-gidere; but god were in þis to blame þat he telde not which he wolde were kept. siþen we taken dymes of þe olde lawe bi oure oun autorite, leue we not þis bileue þat god ȝyueþ vs bi poule apostle; algatis siþ þis is skileful & ynow to a trewe prest. & of þis may men se ouer þat prestis shulden not gedere to hem dymes & offerringis of many chirchis, þat weren ouer þer fode & hilinge, for þus it were not leueful to a prest for to do in þe olde lawe; myche more we shulden not do þus, siþ crist kepte so streyt pouert. ȝif a prest myȝte be two men & do fully þe trauel þat fellide to hem, þanne it were to hym a coulur to take ful hire of two men; for men ben nou more insufficient þan þei weren in cristis tyme. but ȝit it semyþ excusable to haue to-gidere many benefisis, so þat þey come not alle to-gidere but to a skileful sustenaunse of man. but be þou war heere wiþ

Saint Paul's rule to Timothy more binding than the old law.

1 Tim. vi. [8.]

The two really agree.

Priests should not take the tithes of many churches, to have more than their needs.

If a priest could be two men, he might have two men's allowances;

yet pluralism is allowable when a man does not get more than he needs.

ydilnesse & wiþ excesse of dispensis, & algatis putte þy bisynesse to *serue* god & helpe his chirehe, & loue more þes two þingis þan worldly worship or worldly *richees. *[p. 11b MS.] & þus þer ben many mennus lawis of departing of persouns godis, hou þey shulen be delid on foure partis. hou þey & herne shulen first take mesurably of þes godis; þe secound part shulde be ȝouyn to pore & nedy folc wiþ-outeward; þe þridde part shulde be ȝouun to making of þe chirche & ournementis of it; & þe fourþe part shulde be dispendid to kepe þe housis of þe personage. & þis parting were ofte vnskileful, & þus siche general lawe were nouȝt. & þer ben opere difficultees heere, what þing men shulden tiþe, as wode or erbis or oper fruyt; wher laboreris shulden tiþe þer hire; & hooris or vsureris tiþe þer wynnyng; wiþ many siche doutis in lawe; þe whiche dyuynes shulden leue vntretid, & lyue in pouert & *serue* þe chirche. for cristis prestis shulden haue no custom to ocupie hem wiþ siche stryues, but gedere al þer bisynesse to *serue* god & his chirche.

Rules commonly given for disposing of tithes.

Hurtful disputes as to whether tithes are due from woods, from wages, from whores, and usurers.

Divines should leave these matters.

Capitulum 18^m.

i t were to telle ouer þis hou þes herdis shulden kepe þer sheep in hoolynesse of þer oune lif & in preching of goddis word. & þanne þey ledden hem bi grene lesewis & water of heuene þat ben hoolsum, & þis is þe firste offyss of þre þat falliþ to a goostly shepparde. first shulde þe persoun fle in hym silf lustly fode & proud aray, & þenke on þis, þat his godis whanne þei ben gederid, be þey neuere so many, ben gederid of his pore pariȝschens, as ben wedewis & nedy men; so þat o peny gederid þus wolde saue þe lif of his sheep þat steruyþ. & þus it is a fendis boost to a curat to auaunte hym þat he may so myche dispende bi ȝeere, siþ þei ben cuylid pens of pore men; & þis is noon auaunt to þe persoun, but resoun to rikene for al þis almes. & þis is more þan worldly dette, siþen he is holdun to ȝelde betere; & oure iuge

Pastors should live holily and preach God's word.

The priest should think that all his goods come from his poor parishioners,

and that he will
have to give a true
account of them.

*[p. 12 MS.]
God is most
liberal, and
wishes curates
to have what
they need.

They do not need
rich clothes,

or handsome
furniture.

or valuable plate.

To waste money
on hawks and
hounds is dam-
nable in a priest.

may not be disseyued, siþ he is crist wisdom of god. þes
curatis þat lyuen to lustly shulden þenke hou godis þat þey
han ben gederid of pouert of symple men bi streit nede
& hard lif. but who wolde waste a precious water þat were
distillid bi bisy trauel, & caste þis water in a lake where it
stood to no mannus profit? & þes men þat lyuen þus lustly ben
þe more vnhabable to preche & to preye; but no drede, siþ oure
*god is resoun & þe freest man þat may be, he wole þat
curatis haue skileful fode; but þer lust may not be iuge
heere, but resoun must nedis iuge, for it mut iuge at domes
day. & þe same skile is of oþer aparel, to bac, to chaumbre
& to halle, as many han to costly cloþis, furroures & girdlis
& shap of hem; & ende of þis is worldly glory & no profit to
þer soulis; & þe same synne is in aparel of chaumbre, as in
proud beddis testeris & curteyns: bi þis may men se veyn
dispensis þat þe fendis cautil haþ foundun. curioustest stondiþ
in hallis, boþe in making of þe housis, in doseris, bancurs
& cuþshens, & mo veyn þingis þan we kunnen rikene, as ben
diþschis & coupis of siluer & oþer vessel, & costly naprye.
in alle siche shulden persouns þenke of þis reule þat god haþ
þouyn of skileful¹ ende of alle siche þingis; & mesure þe
menes bi þis ende, & euere more drawe to pouert, þat it
shyne in alle siche þingis. but prestis wasting in oþere
þingis, as ben horsis, haukis & houndis, & costly making of
feestis, ben ful dampnable bifore god; for þey shynen wiþ
worldly ioie, & ben writun wiþ vicis azenus resoun. what
skile is it at þe day of doom to answeere to þe lord of þes
godis þat pore men, þat shulden haue þes godis, periþsche
wiþ-uten bi many defaultis, & her godis be wastid wiþ-ynne
wiþ rot & wormes & oþer maner. þis is no skileful acounte
to god to ȝyue hym rikenyng of his tyþis.

¹ skilefully MS.

Capitulum 19^m.

o f þis wasting of goddis godis springen synnes þat harmen
 þe chirche, for siche curatis ȝyuen not ensauple hou Luxurious
curates do not
teach their people
to fight against
their flesh.
 men shulen fiȝte aȝenus þer fleys. but it may falle
 many tymes þat siche persouns bi lechchery waste þer pore
 pariȝschens godis, & þis is a greet synne. it is yuel to kepe It is bad to keep
a useless horse in
the stable,
 a wast hors in stable to destrie pore mennus godis, but it is
 worse to have a womman wiȝ-yne or wiȝ-oute at racke & but worse to have
a woman at rack
and manger.
 at manger, for þis holding is more costly & more wast to
 body & soule. þe lawe spekiȝ of siche holours þat synnen The (pope's) law
forbids hearing
the mass of a
fornicator.
 þus out of matrimõnye, hou þey ben not weddid wiȝ þe
 chirche ne wiȝ god, þat is þe soulis spouse; & hou men
 shulden not here þer massis, & bi þe same sky*le take not *[p. 12b MS.]
 of hem noon oȝer spiritual seruys. for al þer lif is wlappid
 wiȝ synne, & þey don harm what euere þei don. & þus men Menshould with-
draw their tithes.
 shulden not ȝyue hem offeringis ne oȝere tiȝis, þe while
 þey lyuen þus, for þat were consent to þer synne, & to nurshe
 hem aȝenus crist. but ech man of þis world, be he neuere
 so myȝti heere, þat makȝ þus party aȝenus crist, mut nedis
 falle & destrie hym silf; for treuȝe mut vencusche al oȝer
 þing. & þis wiȝdrawing of temporal godis were betere This would be
better than
setting archdea-
cons to fine them.
 bridil aȝenus siche men þan to amersy hem bi officials, bi
 erchedekenes or bi bischops; for siche robbing is but nurshing
 of more synne. for siche a persoun wole robbe his pariȝs
 whanne he may bie his synne þus liȝtly; & so þe pore men It is the parish-
ioners who pay
the fines.
 of his pariȝs shulen bie his synne bi double weye, boȝe þey
 shulen paye þerfore to þe bischop, and be punyȝschid bi
 consent of soule. but what is þe pariȝs holpun herby, but
 ȝif þe fend helpe a man? for bodily & goostly þis curat doiȝ
 harm to his sheep more falsly þan koude þe fend, for he is
 more homely enemye. & þis wiȝ-drawing of godis for þis
 synne semyȝ to strecche for oȝere synnes, for ȝif an herde
 be doup at home & ȝyue hym to worldly ocupacioun, &
 wiȝ-drawe his goostly help fro his sheep þat he shulde fede,

The tithes may be given to help poor men against the oppression of Antichrist.

Curates who live at the Court of Rome should not be paid.

*[p. 13 MS.]

or ȝif he stonde in lordis courtis or in offiss of þe king or of oþere, and leue þe seruyss þat god axiþ to kepe his sheep in goddis lawe; ȝif þis synne passe lecchery, it shulde be more punyȝshid bi skile. & so men shulden wiþ-drawe þer tiþis & ȝyue hem to oþere wisely. it were an almes & greet wit to ȝyue tiþis of sicke wolues to oþere pariȝschens þat ben trauelid bi lawis þat anticrist haþ brouȝt yn; & so ofte tyme þe remenaunt of tiþis were to litil for dispensis þat anticrist makith to pursue sicke men, þat stonden for resoun of goddis lawe. & hou euere iuges speken heere, þis were not aȝenus goddis lawe, for al sicke almes of tiþis shulde be boþe skileful & willeful; but what skile is it to hire a wolf to do harm to a pariȝs? þis were a mouyng of þe fend, þat stirith euere aȝenus skile. & þe same skile is of curatis þat stonden in þe court of rome forto gete mo benefisis, or to serue þat wickid court; *for þes ben smyttid wiþ symonye & don men harm ouer þe see, as a iust man of ynde profitith to engliȝsch men; for þe lord þat seeþ þis meede is euery where to dele it wel. for sum help axiþ bodily residense, & sum help axiþ noon; as preyeris & many oþere gode dedis ben as wel don afer as neer; but þis is noon herdis offiss to be hirid for tiþis or offeringis.

Capitulum 20^m.

Prelates should teach their people to conquer the world and the devil.

Readiness to go to law with them is not good teaching.

t were for to wite ouer hou prelatis shulden teche þer sugetis to vencuȝsche þe world & þe fend, for to þis lore ben þei holdun. lore to vencuȝsche þe world stonðith specialy in charite, & in fleyng of coueytise to godis of þer pariȝs & oþere; & so it semyþ an yuel lore to ȝyue pariȝschens ensauple to plete & to stryue wiþ hem for litil, whanne þey han ynow bi-syde. for sicke ple is groundid in wronge don aȝenus goddis lawe, for bi goddis lawe prestis shulden haue no more but fode & hiling for þer offiss, & al þe remenaunt of þer hire þey shulden hope of god in blis. Also it fallith

comynly þat a curat dispendiþ as myche in plees mayntenyd for his tiþis as ben þe tiþis in hem silf; but where is þanne encrees of his wynnynge? it semyþ þat wrapþe of his pariþschen & harm of hym stonden for þe wynnynge; but how stondiþ þis wiþ charite to þe man þat prestis shulden algatis loue? & þus biddiþ poul to cristenmen, but specialy to curatis, þat þey shulden be moost dere & not defende þer oune persone; myche more þey shulden not defende þe godis þat ben not sib to hem, but men shulden ȝyue stede to ire & algatis prelatis, in suffering of wronge for siche ire, baytiþ a pariþshen aȝenus þe persoun longe tyme aftir. & ȝif þe pope feyne heere þat he ȝyueþ lawis & weye to hem to defende a mannus wrongis in his court; & þis is shewid for many wrongis ben riȝtid þere. & þus þey clepen hym a champioun of riȝt of god, þat can wel plete &, as þey speken, wyne to hooly chirche godis þat shulden falle to it. preise þey þis court þat han mater, but certis heere is no mater; for þis is a cautel of þe fend contrarie to goddis lawe. studie þey cristis paciense & make þei þer chayer in cristis cros, & loke þey wheþer crist or his apostlis tauȝten þus to plete for worldly þingis. & certis þey moten nedis sue crist ȝif þey wolen holde þe weye to heuene. fro a litil errour out *of þis weye may a man come bi grace aȝen, but myche errour wiþ errour of wit makith man to growe in more errour, & no drede, proue who euere wole, a special medicyn aȝenus þe world is to leue stryues in worldly causis; for þus tauȝte crist wiþ his membris. & þus who so wole ouercome þe fend, leue he þe fendis lawe & þe world, & lede he his lif bi cristis lawe, & þus he shal best vencuȝshe hym & ȝyue ensaumples to oþere men, boþe to his pariþshens & oþere, how þey shulden vencuȝshe þe fend. for þes two lawis ben graues to þe fend to gnare men in his net. ȝif þou fle pride & his retenu, þanne þou vencuȝchist wel þe fend; & teche þou þis rewle to oþer men, & þanne þou doost a curatis office.

Lawsuits for tithes sometimes cost as much as the tithes, and the curate gains only the hate of his people.

[Rom. xii. 19.]

The courts are praised because they win goods for the Church.

Christ and his apostles never went to law.

*[p. 13b MS.]

The Civil and Canon Laws are pits in which the devil snares men.

Capitulum 21^m.

The sort of pastor
that is wanted.

it it were to speke more of þis pastoure to ȝyue to þes
sheep. for we shulen take as bileue þat goddis lawe
passiþ alle oþere, boþe in autorite & in treuþe & in wit.

He must preach
the gospel.

first in autorite; for as god passiþ men, so goddis lawe mut
passe in autorite mannus lawe, & herfore god bad his apostlis
not to preche mannus lawe but for to preche þe gospel to al
maner of men. & myche more ben þey to blame þat prechen
iapis & gabbingis; for goddis word mut euere be trewe ȝif it
be wel vndirstondun, & þis word is more hoolsum to men
siþen it is bileue & it techiþ to sue crist, & þat mut ech man
do þat shal be sauȝd. & þerfore þenke we heronne nyȝt
& day, boþe wakinge & slepinge, for whanne oþere lawis moten
haue ende þanne it shal dwelle in blis; & þe herte of þis lawe
is þe gospel of iesu crist. preche prestis þis herte to men
& teche þey hem to loue crist; for he is cursid þat loueþ hym
not & sueþ hym not, as poul seiþ. & certis þat prest is to
blame þat shulde so frely haue þe gospel, & leeueþ þe
preching þer-of & turnyþ hym to mannus fablis. for þe lawe
of god dampnyþ hym þat chesiþ þe worse & þe heuyere
& leeueþ þe betere & þe liȝtere, boþe to hym & to þe puple.

God does not
want rymes.

& god axiþ not dyuysiouns ne rymes of hym þat shulde
preche, but to telle euene goddis gospel & wordis to stire men
þerby. & þus curatis ben not excusid þat leeuen to preche to
þer sheep, for a man shulde not be curat but ȝif he koude
vn*dirstonde þe gospel, & he hap to myche wanting of wit
þat can-not teche hem herby. & ȝif a curat falle a caas þat
he be lettid of þis preching bi hap or defaute of kynde,
whanne he prechide bifore wel, teche he his floce bi hooly lif

*[p. 14 MS.]

A man is not fit
to be a curate
who cannot
understand the
gospel and teach
it.

& god wole haue hym excusid. þe secounde offiss þat falliþ
to herdis is to kepe þer sheep fro woluyes, as false freris,
þat comen to men to robbe þer wolles & do hem harm, ben
clepid of crist woluyes of raueyn. and of þis perel shulden
persouns warne men. & what oþere false prechouris þat

The second office
is to keep the
sheep from
wolves;

comen to men & prechen herfore, þei ben woluyes or foxis or houndis, & alle þes shulden be chased fro þe floce. þe þridde the third to anoint the offiss þat falliþ to persouns is to greese þer scabbid sheep & scabbed sheep. to telle hem medicyn of goddis lawe wherby þat þey may be hool; & ȝif þes herdis faylen in þes þre, þey ben hirid hynes or woluyes. & heere shulden persouns take hede þat þey spuylen not þer sheep for wrongis þat þer prelatis axen; for þey shulden leue þer cure bifore.

Capitulum 22^m.

i t were forto wite ouer hou curatis wasten pore mennus Curates spend godis in makinge þer kyn riche; bisyde þat þey spenden tithes in en- in þer ounne persone; & þus ben many in england maad riching their riche fro ful symple staat. & it semyþ þat þe kyng of pride kinsfolk. haþ tauȝt þis bi his firste synne, for many curatis han delit Curates like to haue riche men of þer kyn & þat þer eldris weren noble to have their men, as ȝif þer kynrede were noble; & þus hem silf shulden families rich seme noble, as ȝif þey camen of greet blood. & sicke ben and noble. turnyd in-to woluyes fro herdis staat, as ipocritis; for þey semen to have an herdis staat, & ȝit þey ben many tymes fendis. for we shulden wite þis at þe bigynnyng þat prestis ben maad prelatis of men, not to lyue worldlyly ne lustly ne proudely, but to lyue in bisy trauel to kepe þer sheep & wyne hem heuene; & so þei moten lyue trewely, trauelously & perelously, siþen þei moten putte þer ounne lif for þer sheep, as crist dide. to þis riching of þersouns kyn moueþ þe fend þes ipocritis bi feyned mersy & bi kynde; & boþe he seiþ comen of god. *What man shulde not haue mersy *[p. 14b MS.] on his pore kyn to helpe hem, for heere is more cause of The devil argues mersy þan to helpe oþere straunge men; as a man loueþ bi that mercy and kynde more his lemes þan oþere mennus, so bi kynde he nature teach men shulde loue more his kyn þan oþere strange men. & by to help their þis cause many prelatis coueyten to be riche & auaunsen men kindred. of þer kyn, al ȝif þey ben idiotis; but þe bileue of iesu

Christ did not
enrich his mother
and cousins.

We should live in
the same way as
Christ.

These prelates
and curates
injure their
kindred.

crist shulde teche men to quenche þis pride. crist louyde ful wel his kyn, as his modir & his cosyns, but he louyde hem not to be worldly riche but forto lyue a pore lif, bitwixe siche richees & beggyng; for þus men shulden haue lyued in staat of innocense & staat of blis, & þis is best for þe soule þe which men shulden moost loue. & þe loue of crist is loue so nedeful to cristenmen, þat þer loue is but hate but ȝif it be ensaumplid of cristis loue. & þus clerkis haten þer kyn þat maken hem riche of pore mennus godis; for bi þis þey harmen þer soule & maken hem synne bi many weyes. þer body is þus more vnhabable to serue þer soule in temperure, & þey ben felowis bi assent to robbe þes pore men of þer godis; & no drede cause of þis pride is vnprofitable to hem, for nobley in vertues shulde be coueytid & worldly nobley litil teld by, but in as myche as it helpide men to kepe nobley in vertues. & in tokene of þis þing crist cam boþe of riche men & pore, as of kyngis & bonde men þe while þey lyueden in egipt. & boþe þes condiciouns diden good whanne grace of crist mouyde men to vertues. & þus þes prelatis harmen þer kyn to make hem riche on þis maner. & þus þes curatis louynge þus þer kyn synnen many weyes in maner of loue, for þey louen þer oune fleys more þan þey louen þer briþeren in god, & crist seiþ þey ben not worþy of crist to be clepid cristenmen; & ȝit crist shulde be oure nexste fadir, & his chirche oure nexste modir. & þus þes prelatis þat turnen þis loue synnen boþe in god & man, & disusen kyndely wille as don synneris in leccherye; & þus þey synnen in mersy & loue & in god & þer pore parischens. & herfore seiþ poul þat persouns offiss shulde not be to parte þes godis, but to preche & teche þe folc & holde hem payed wiþ fode & hiling. but litil errour & ydilnesse in þe bigynnyng of a staat bringiþ in *more aftir, as it falliþ heere & in opere statis.

*[p. 15 MS.]

Capitulum 23^m.

i t were forto declare heere þat riȝt preching of goddis word is þe mooste worþy dede þat prestis don heere among men. for crist, mesure of al good, vside moost þis werk heere & tauȝte whanne he wente to heuene his apostlis to do þis werk; & þus, siþen crist is best maystir, it is shewid of bileue þat preching is þe beste werk þat a prest doiþ in þis weye. Also goodnesse of werkis is mesurid bi fruyt þat comeþ of hem; but more fruyt comeþ of good preching þan of ony oþer werk, & þerfore siche good preching is þe beste werk þat a prest doiþ; for bi þis werk a prest getiþ goddis children & mak iþ hem to come to heuene. & herfore seiþ poul to his puple: “in crist iesu y haue gendrid ȝou;” & herfore crist preisiþ more preching of þe gospel þat gendriþ þis chirche þan gendring of his oun body, al ȝif þey boþe ben gode werkis. & þus seyn clerkis þat gendrure, siþ it saueþ comyn kynde, is betere þan is nurshing þat saueþ o persone of þis kynde. & þus seiþ crist in lukis gospel to a womman þat blisside cristis modir & sayde, “blissid be þe wombe þat bare þee & þe tetis þat þou hast sokun,” & crist seyde: “ȝe but blissid ben þey þat heren goddis word & kepen it.” & bi þe same skile or myche more þei ben blissid þat prechen goddis word. lord, hou worþy werk it is to gendre god in mannus soule bi seed þat is goddis word; for þis mut haue greet meede in heuene, boþe for þe werk in hym silf & of þe children þat comen þer-of. & herfore seiþ ioon euangelist þat he haþ no more grace heere þan to here his children go in treuþe. & ȝif þou seist þat a prest may not gete siche children in god; certis he may bi help off god, & ellis no man may gete a child, for god ȝyueþ bi hym silf þe soule, & who gat a child but ȝif it were ȝouyn? & herfore þenkiþ seynt austyn wel þat crist dide more myracle bi his apostlis to turne so manye heþen men in so short while fro so wickid

Preaching the best work priests can do.

Christ preached and bade his apostles do so.

Preaching brings more fruit than any other work.

By preaching children are begotten to God.

[1 Cor. iv. 15.]

Preaching better than consecrating the elements.

[Luke xi. 27.]

Good preaching
the best craft.

*[p. 15b MS.]

Great sin of
hindering it.

lif for to be þus cristis children, þan weren oþere myraclis of crist; & herfore þe apostlis chosen more to preche þan to do bodily almes. Also þe more þat crist helpiþ to a werk þe more it is good; but crist helpiþ more specialy to preching þan to oþer werk, & þerfore it mut nedis be betere for crist endiþ it þus graciously. & herfore seyn wise doctours þat it is more to preche wel þan to do ony oþer craft, as phisik or alkemonye; & herfore crist *bad his apostlis do many werkis but noon as þis. for in þis a prest elopiþ hym in cristis persone & getiþ cristis broþer, his sister & his modir. & of þis may a man gedere þat it is more synne to fayle in þis þan to fayle in oþere werkis þat ben not so gode as þis is. lord, siþ þe synne of sodom cryede to god for greet veniaunse, hou shal þis synne þat lettiþ þis gendrure crye to god to be a-vengid.

Capitulum 24^m.

Three ways of
sinning as to
preaching:

the preacher in
not sowing good
seed,

or in mixing
poison of worldly
motive with the
seed,

[2 Cor. ii. 17.]

i t were to wite ouer þis hou men fallen in þis synne, & what medicyn were aȝenus it, siþ þis werk is so precious. þre maner of folc synnen heere; sumtyme þe prest þat shulde preche, þe puple þat shulde here þis preching, & he þat lettiþ goddis word to renne. þis prechoure may synne on many maners bi þat þat he sowiþ not good seed, but iapis & gabbingis or oþere tryuolis, & leueþ to preche þe word of god. for luk seiþ þat þat is seed þat no defaute is foundun ynne, al ȝif þre defautes ben in þe lond vpon which þis seed is castun. on oþer maner þis prest þat sowiþ may meddle venym wiþ þis seed, as whanne he prechiþ for veyn glory or for coueytise of worldly good. & herfore seiþ poul to his puple þat we ben not holours of goddis word, but of clenness, as we speken of god, we speken bifore god in crist. & wolde god þat prechours nou wolde lerne þis lessoun of poul; þanne þey shulden speke of god & not þus of rotun seed, & as þei weren bifore god, kepinge good maner in þis lordis presence. & þey shulden preche for cristis worship

on his maner not for muc. for among alle symonyes þat which is the worst of all forms of symony, much practised by mendicants. euere crist sufferide in þe chirche þis is þe fouleste of alle opere, vsid ofte of prechour beggeres, for þey wolen gedere comynly godis aftir þat þey han prechid; oper money or corn or what opere godis þat þey may gete. & þe fonnydnesse of þe puple makip hem parcneris of þe beggeris synne, for Those who give are partners of the sin. whanne þey ȝyuen hem godis heere þey assenten to þer symonye. & þis is a foul errour þat many seyn in þis mater þat þey ȝyuen for goddis loue & þat is ynow for hem, for certis þis wiss lord axip boþe his godis & good maner. & for þis good maner man haþ meede, & ȝif he faylip hym wantip meede; & to destrie þis errour seiþ crist in þe gospel of seynt matheu þat summe dampnyd men shulen seye to crist: “sire, [Matt. vii. 22.] kestiden we not out fendis *in þy name & diden vertues in *[p. 16 MS.] þy name?” but crist shal seye to þese men: “soþely, y seye to ȝou y knowe ȝou not as children of blis, for ȝee failiden of good maner.” lord, siþ þes men shulen be dampnyd þat prechen goddis word in cristis name & casten out fendis Punishment will fall on mendicants who slander Christ. & don vertues, what meede shulen þes beggeris haue, þat faylen in þis & lyȝen on crist & seyn þat crist beggide þus to holde vp þer newe ordris. crist wiste ful wel þat þes shulden come whanne he bad hem not go fro hous to hous, [Mark vi. 8-10.] but dwelle in oon & wende not þennus, & bere not vpon þer backis baggis ne sachels to begge þus.

Capitulum 25^m.

a s anentis two opere defautis þat letten goddis word to growe, crist tellip þre defautis in þe erþe þat shulde take þis word. Christ tells of three defects in the soil that should take the seed. summen ben bi-syde þe weye, & so bisied wiþ þe world þat goddis word takip not wiþ hem, but þe fendis letten it. opere men ben drye as stoons & han no delit in wordis but ȝif þey sounen to worldly wynnyng, & þese wanten boþe grace & wisdom. þe þridde maner of men þat heren goddis word ben so prickid wiþ worldly richees þat þe

Of the worst sort
are emperor pre-
lates,

who do for the
devil what he
cannot do him-
self.

Such a prelate is
a wicked hay-
ward stopping
Christ's way.

*[p. 16b MS.]

Friars get true
preaching
stopped that
their false
preaching may
be spread.

False preachers
should be
stopped.

þenking on þes godis lettij þe word of god to growe; & to
þes þre may be reducid al þe synne in þe hereris. þe þridde
men synnen more, as ben emperour prelatiþ þat wolen not
suffere a man to preche whanne he telliþ þer defaultis but
whanne he preisiþ hem & herne, & þis nurschiþ myche synne.
for sicke prelatiþ þat kunnen not preche or wolen not for
bisynesse, & letten oþere trewe prestis to preche bi þer lordly
cautels, passen þe fend in þis synne bi menes þat he haþ
ordeyned to hem. for þe fend haþ no iurisdiccoun ne feyned
power as þey han, & þus þat he may not do hym-silf he doiþ
bi sicke seruauentis to hym. & no drede þis is þe fendis dede
to lette men to sowe goddis word, for þerby þer soulis shulden
be fed & goddis worchip be don of men, but þey maken
a goostly hungir & stoppen þe worchip of god. but where
is a worse condicioun folowinge prelatiþ of anticrist? it
were yuel to lette gendrure maad in laweful matrymonye,
þat pharao dide not in egipt but dreynthe þe children whanne
þey weren borun, but þis is worse wiþ-uten mesure to lette
þus crist to be gendrid in men. sicke a prelat semyþ a
wickid hayward to lette trewe men forto trauele & go
euene bi goddis weye, in which crist haþ ȝouyn hem leue to
go. for god þat ȝyueþ sicke wit & wille shapiþ þe puple to
take þis seed. * & it is al oon to seye þat y shul lette þee bi
iurisdiccoun, & to seye þis is a place þat þe fend is lord of
& not crist; & as þes wordis ben nedis false, so is þis
iurisdiccoun; for he haþ no riȝt to seye þes wordis, but þei
ben falsly feyned of þe fend. & freris procuren comynly boþe
lordis & bischops to lette þis preching, so þat þer fals preching
be sprad & þer wynnyng aȝenus crist, & þus is þe puple robbid
of goostly help & bodily. We graunten þat iurisdiccoun
shulde lette false prechours to preche; but nou haþ þe fend
turnyd cristis chirche bi his prelatiþ, þat he þat wolde treuly
preche þe word of þe gospel wiþ-uten hire, he shal be put
a-bac, & contrarie prechour shal be takun, & þus wickid hay-
wardis of þe fend letten þis seed þat crist shulde sowe.

Capitulum 26^m.

a nt þus þer ben many causis þat letten goddis word to
 renne, & þe fend haþ trauelid aboute þes causis many
 ȝeer ful bisily; for trewe *preching* of goddis word displesih
 myche to þe fend. o cause is dowing of þe chirche & riching
 þer-of ouer cristis wille, for bi þis prelatis slepen in synne
 & ben to fatte to *preche* þe puple, & þus þer bisynesse is
 stoppid to gete hem more of worldly muc. & þus þei fallen
 in an-oþer cause þat þei ben not payed of poulis reule to
 haue ynow of fode & hiling. & heere breken out þes freris
 ordris, for al ȝif þei han no worldly lordchip as han prestis
 þat ben dowid, ȝit þei spuylen men of moeblis & wasten hem
 in noumbre & housis, & þis excees is more synne þan synne of
 þe fend in o persone. & þus þey turnen þe ende of þer
preching for-to gete hem siche godis. & þis entent mut nedis
 make falsed in maner of þer *preching*, for þei shapen þer
sermouns more to gete hem good þan to profite to þe chirche;
 & as þe firste wile of þe fend bigan soone in siluestris tyme,
 so þis secound wile bigan in grounding of þes newe ordris.
 þe þridde cause þat lettih trewe *preching* is appropriing of
 churches. for whanne churches ben approprid, þes curatis
 tellen not bi þis *preching*, as munkis or chanouns or oþere
 collegies, but bi gederung of godis; & þus þey ben maad
 slowe to *preche* & stronge to gedere dymes to hem. & þis
 cautel cam laterȝ yn & is alarged by þe pope. þe fourþe cause
 is bringing in of false freris bi many cuntreys; for, as it is
 seid bifore, þei letten trewe *preching* to renne & maken
 curatis bi many weyes to leue þis moost worþy offiss.
 First þey robben hem many weyes & maken hem bisy for
 to lyue, for þey deprauen hem to þer parischens bi floriȝshid
 wordis þat þey bringen yn; & no drede þey shapen þer
sermouns bi dyuy*siouns & oþere iapis þat þey maken
 moost plese þe puple. & þus þey erren in bileue & maken
 þe puple to trowe to hem þat *sermouns* ben nouȝt but in þer

Causes that pre-
vent preaching:

Endowment of
the Church,
which makes
prelates too
fat to preach.

Friars rob men of
movable goods.

They preach
mainly for gain.

Appropriation
of churches.
Appropriators
care more to
gather tithes
than to preach.

False friars

slander parish
priests.

They preach
elaborate ser-
*[p. 17 MS.]
mons and teach
that no others
are worth any-
thing.

Simple curates
are afraid to
preach.

The new sects
sin worse than
Sodom and
Gomorrha.

The people are
infected with
this sin.

People should
not give to the
friars.

Court of Rome
the nest of Anti-
christ.

foorme & þus þei stoppen symple curatis þat þei doren not preche to þe puple, & þis defaute of preching of crist is more þan defaute in hereris. & so as crist seiþ in þe gospel, boþe sodom & gomor shulen be lesse punyshid at domes day þan þes newe sectis brouzt yn; for þey synneden in *mannus* seed, but þes synnen in seed of god, þat is goddis word, þat prestis shulden preche to turne þe lewid puple to god. & as it is seyð bifore, þe puple is smyttid bi þis synne, for þe puple assentiþ to hem bi iapis & wilis þat þey tellen hem. þe puple shulde not trowe to þe prechour what euere he seye in þis staat, but ȝif his word be groundid in god as goddis lawe or suyng *þer-of*. for þis staat is not couenable to telle iapis ne bourdis to men, but þat þat wole trewely fede *þer* soule, as is þe gospel & oþer goddis lawe. & þis bourding or oþere iapis shulde make þes freris suspect heere & make hem wante worldly wynnyng, for þey ben worþy myche more peyne; but lewidnesse of þe puple makip hem nurshe *þer* mooste enemyes. & god make þis enemyte knowun. for þis is þe laste & þe mooste fendis cautel; but good wille & trewe speche of goddis lawe shulde make hem knowun. for failing of goddis word & coueytise of *mennus* good shewen opiny to men whoos children þat þey ben. lord, siþen pariȝshens shulden take þe preching of *þer* oune curat & þe mynistring þat he shulde do, for þat shulde suffise to þat puple, Why shulden not men fle fro þes false prophetis, as crist biddip in þe gospel? but bullis of þe court of rome blynden many men heere, for it semeþ þe hed of errour & propre nest of anticrist.

Capitulum 2[7^m.]

Sects disturb the o
Church militant.

f þis may wise men see þat þes foure sectis newe brouzt in, as emperour clerkis, munkis & chanouns & þes foure ordris of freris, disturblen moost þis fiȝtinge chirche & putten it fro þe cours of crist, & þus þes men þat nurshen hem, as worldly lordis & fonnyd comyns & lewid

prestis, þat kunnen not speke or doren not speke in goddis
 cause, nurshen *anticrist* & hise traytourly *azenus* crist. þat
 ordre þat crist haþ ordeyned in his chirche shulden we holde,
 & mende errours in þis ordre; & not bringe in newe charg
 to þe chirche. for *as wanting of gode partis is defaute in
 oure-modir body, so *superfluyte* is defaute in þe same body;
 For þis bringiþ in ydilnesse & charging of hooly chirche.
 & bileue techiþ men þat þer is as myche wit in þe ordenaunse
 of crist as in þe wordis of his gospel; and bileue techiþ
 ouer þat crist faylide not to his chirche to ȝyue his ordenaunse
 to it in þe making of hir partis. for men putten as myche
 wit or more to good ordenaunse of man as to worching of
 man aftir þis ordenaunse bifore. for wisere men moten
 ordeyne first, & lesse wiss moten worche þer-aftir. & þis
 moueþ many men to speke *azenus* þes foure sectis, for no
 man kan grounde hem in þe ordenaunse of cristis lawe, &
 no man seiþ þat crist forȝat hem ȝif crist wolde þat þey
 weren of his chirche; & þus men putten vpon crist oþer foly
 or *negligense*. 'but who shulde here þis blasfemye but ȝif he
 spake sharply *azenus* it? cristis ordenaunse is put bi-hynde
 & his lore, & oþer brouȝt in, & þis turneþ þe chirche vpsedoun,
 & lett iþ men to serue crist. and lewid foolis, þat arguen
 heere þat crist ordeyned not þis prest, shulden lerne þe lawe
 of porfirie, hou god ordeynede in a comyn þing alle þe
 synguleris þer-of. & þus dwelle þou in þe iust boundis þat
 god haþ ordeyned for his prest, & þanne god haþ ordeyned
 þee in þe comyn kynde of prestis. but *anticrist* can-not
 grounde þat god ordeynede þe kynde of popis, ne of oþere
 emperour clerkis, ne of munkis, ne of chanouns, ne of foure
 ordris of freris, al ȝif he ordeynede good to come of hem;
 as god ordeynede no man to synne al ȝif he ordeynede good
 to come of synne. & þes foure ordris smacchen synne, siþen
 þei tellen not first cristis ordenaunse, but bringing yn of þe
 fend to reuerse þe ordenaunse of crist. & þus lordis of þis
 world þat mayntenen lumpis of þes ordris & þer housis &
 possessiouns, wiþ oþere þingis þat þey han foundun, moten

*[p. 17b MS.]
 Superfluity in the
 Church as bad as
 defect.

Christ gave no
 ground for these
 orders.

Keep yourself in
 the bounds that
 Christ ordained
 for his priests.

Antichrist cannot
 prove that God
 ordained these
 four orders.

These four orders
 smack of sin.

nedis synne, in as myche as þei reuersen cristis ordenaunse, & in þat þat þey letten pore prestis to preche þe gospel to þe puple, al ȝif þey ben not of þes newe ordris þat ben closid in cayms castels. y rede not of cristis apostlis þat þey kepten þis maner of preching, whanne þe hooly goost hadde tauȝt hem to gete to crist al þis world. & þat prest þat sueþ þis goost is in þat ordre þat crist haþ ordeyned. wedding wiþ þes newe bilawis, passinge þe wedding wiþ goddis lawe, makip þes newe rotun sectis & puttip bi-hynde þe sect of crist. & þus þes ordris newe brouȝt in bringen wiþ hem a newe bileue, þat noon of cristis sect wiþ-uten hem lyueþ so hoolyly as þey, þat lordis han a passinge merit to grounde þes ordris & ȝyue hem godis, but þey *wolen not do þis charite, be þey neuere woxun so ryche, but þey wolden rapere destrie oþere newe ordris þat ben brouȝt in; & þus þe laste ordre of freris seiþ aȝenus goddis lawe þat willeful begging is more meedeful þan ony lif of þes oþere ordris.

Cain's castles.

Caring more for their bye-laws than for Christ's law makes these rotten sects.

*[p. 18 MS.]

Capitulum 28^m.

m en may se bi lif of ordris hou cristis ordenaunse is lettid. crist ordeynede, as hym þouȝte best, þat his disciplis aftir his steyng to heuene shulden be departid oon fro an oþer. & ech of hem shulde haue his folc, & shulden not be weddid wiþ mannus lawe, ne wiþ folc, ne wiþ housis, but holde hem payed of goddis lawe, & chaunge folc as god mouyde hem, & haue no propre dwelling of þer oune, as crist þer maystir tauȝte bifore. Al þis is reuersid nou bi help & assent of men; for herto helpen þe pope & prelatis, worldly lordis & ordris hem silf, & pore men ben nedid to helpe as beestis led to be killid. costly chirchis of þes ordris & oþere housis þat þey han destrien olde pariȝs chirchis þat weren ordeyned bi cristis apostlis. & siþ crist is lord of alle & not contrarie to hym silf, no drede men han not his godis þus to reuerse his ordenaunse; & þus ben manye

Christ ordained that his apostles should be separated,

and that they should be bound to no one place or people.

The churches, etc., of the orders ruin old parish churches.

cayms castels maad & maytened to þes ordris *azenus* leewe of þe cheef lord. but who dredij þat ne he is wroþ her-wij? & þis semeþ þe cause of werris & wrongis þat ben nou growun in þe chirche. lordis & men þat miȝten helpe heere shulden make men turne to cristis ordre. & ȝif persouns hadden no glebe & no propre hous as eritage, þey sieden more crist & his apostlis; & wolde god þey wolden do þus. For it is takun of bileue þat þe ordenaunse of crist bi-syde siche housis & cloystris spedij more to do his *seruyss* þan siche *contrarie* ordenaunsis; & her-fore þes newe ordris moten nedis lyue *contrarie* to crist. for siþen ordenaunsis & lyues gon to-gidere of men heere, as cristis ordenaunse is chaungid, so lyues of þes lumpis ben chaungid, & no drede to þe worse, as *mannus* ordenaunse is worse þan cristis. & ȝit lordis of þis world to whom crist was so kynde ben not payed of þis reuersinge, but ben brouȝt in bi þe fend to haue dwellinge in þer housis boþe curatis & þes newe ordris, as þou mayst se in lordis housis persouns or munkis or chanouns & algatis freris to lede þer meyne. but god mut algatis punyshe þis, for þes persouns shulden kepe þer sheep aftir þe lawe þat god haþ ȝouyn hem. but who may reuerse goddis ordenaunse *heere but ȝif he renne in his offense, & *[p. 18b MS.] þus lordis synnen heere boþe *azenus* god & man & letten goddis pees to be tauȝt, & þus londis moten nedis be disturblid. & as anentis þes newe ordris þat ben scaterid in lordis housis, it is a more vnkyndly wondir, & helpij þe fend to marre þer housis. for as þey seyn þat groundiden þes cloystris, þes men myȝten no more dwelle out þer-of þan fiȝs myȝte dwelle out of water, for vertu þat þey han þer-ynne. for ellis þes cloystris weren not nedeful ne þer oop to kepe þer reule. & siche wondris newe brouȝt in moten nedis marre men of þe world, for daliaunse wiþ newe deuels bringij in newe giles to lette cristenmen. but sum men grucchen more heere þat persouns ben holden þus traytourly *azenus* þe *seruyss* þat crist haþ lymytid to kepe þe soulis of his sheep, & no drede crist preisij moost þis offiss among

These many
Cain's castles are
cause of wars
and wrongs.

Parsons would
be better without
parsonage or
glebe.

Since the re-
ligious leave
Christ's rule,
their life is also
contrary to
Christ.

Lords have
priests living in
their houses, who
ought to be look-
ing after their
flock.

Founders of
cloisters say that
monks may no
more live out of
them than fish
out of water.

Some men think
that keeping
parsons from
their work is
even worse.

Lords should set
these things to
rights.

alle *opere*, & *ȝit* consenten þes worldly lordis in cowardise
azenus crist, for þey destrien not sicke traytours of god, but
þat shulde be þer hye offiss.

Capitulum 29^m.

What men should
be curates, and
who should
choose them.

Claims of the
Pope, of
bishops, and of
lay patrons.

Simony in
appointments.

Curates should
have only food
and clothing,

and then there
would be no
striving for cures.

*[p. 19 MS.]

men myȝten heere touche ouer þis what maner man is able
bi god to be chosun to curatis offiss, & who shulde chese
hym, & on what maner. & no drede sicke a prest þat
haþ boþe wit & wille to do þe þre offiss of an herde, þat ben
teld bifore tyme, shulde be takun to þis offis aftir þe lawe
& wille of god. but who shulde chese hym þerto is myche
strif by *mannus* lawe; as þe pope seiþ þat he shulde
lymyte alle curatis to sicke offiss. bishops seyn þat þei
shulden ȝyue sicke offiss who euere presentip, & lewyd
patrouns seyn þat þey shulden presente to sicke offiss bi þer
lordchip, but goddis lawe telliþ litil or nouȝt of sicke chesing
of curatis. & no drede þat ne coueytise & pride reynghen
in alle þes þre cheseris, for þe pope haþ þe firste fruytis &
many ȝiftis gon bi symonye, & two *opere* axen *seruyss* of
hym þat þey maken curat. & þus þenken summen þat bi
goddis lawe & resoun curatis shulden wel do þer offiss &
haue no more but fode & hiling, & *oper* þe puple þat shulde
be tauȝt or prestis bi þer oune wille shulden chese þis
seruyss of prestis; & þanne it were more meedeful, and no strif
shulde þanne falle aboute þe godis of þis curat, for he shulde
haue no wast godis but þat þat were nedeful to his offiss.
& instuyng wiþ inducting & many *opere* *mannus* lawis weren
not to charge, but riȝt offiss þat þis curat shulde do. & it
semyþ a greet þraldom brouȝt in bi *anticrist* þat a puple
þat þe pope knowiþ not, as he knowiþ not þis able prest,
shulde be nedid bi þe pope to take þis prest, & ȝyue hym
godis more þan goddis *lawe lymytip hou euere þat he
mynistre; for boþe þis almes shulde be meedeful & frely
don bi goddis lawe, & it were to greet *seruage* to nede men

to ȝyue þer godis to a prest þat dide hem harm, ȝe ȝif he were
 cause of þer dampnyng. but þe fendis part is so strong, &
 strengþid bi ipocrisie þat mannus lawe is so hooly & biddiþ
 men to obesche þerto vp payne of þer dampnacioun, þat
 goddis lawe is put bihynde. men shulden bi goddis lawe
 ȝyue þis almes frely & wisely to þat prelat þat seruede hem
 trewely in þis offiss, and so þey moten kunne goddis lawe
 & holde hem payed of þis ȝifte, for þus diden poul & oþere
 apostlis. what lawe shulde reuerse þis resoun? & it semyþ
 not a popis offiss to make þus prelatis in vnknowun cuntreys;
 for it is neþer groundid in goddis lawe þat þer shulde be
 siche a pope ne þat he shulde þus reule þe puple bi þe
 lordchip of his lawe. & no drede ȝif þes two shulden be,
 crist wolde haue ensaumplid hem; for crist failide not in
 siche hye poyntis þat weren so nedeful to his chirche. & þus
 crist in leeuynge of þis techiþ þat it shulde not be, for ellis
 crist were defauty in ordeynnyng for his chirche.

Men have to pay
 their priest, even
 if he does them
 harm.

Popes should not
 appoint prelates
 in distant coun-
 tries.

Capitulum 30^m.

3 it trewe men han delit to reherse þis bileue, for it is
 more precious þan ony gold or precious stoon, & triacle
 to lordis & many oþere to aȝenstonde þe fend & hise.
 & þis bileue stondiþ in þis, þat no man shulde sue oþer pope
 ne bishop ne ony aungel but in as myche as he sueþ crist, for
 crist is boþe god & man. & þis bileue wolde teche lordis to
 purge þer reumes of anticrist; & siþen þei han many skiles
 þat prestis shulden not be þus dowid, boþe bi þe olde lawe
 & þe newe, & bi þe lif þat crist ledde, þey shulden be heere
 hardy in bileue & lette þis dowing of anticrist, & neþer
 obesche to pope ne bischop but ȝif þey tauȝten þat þey sieden
 crist in þis. & seyntis þat þey kunnen alegge shulden neþer
 be heere suyd ne trowid, but ȝif it be tauȝt þat þei sieden
 crist in þat þat þey helden wiþ þis dowing. & siþen lordis han
 conscience her-of & it is synne to do aȝenus conscience, þey

True men de-
 light to repeat,
 that no man
 should be fol-
 lowed, save as
 far as he follows
 Christ.

Lords who be-
 lieved this would
 stop endowment.

shulden axe of popis & prelatis hou þey grounden þis in crist. & ȝif þey wolen not or kunnen not, in þat þey shewen þat þey ben foolis to holde þis & lyue þer-aftir, siþ it is not groundid vpon crist. & ȝif þey seyn þat crist groundiþ it to be don of his vikeris, shewe þey where & in what maner, & þanne þer conscience is clerid. & ȝif þey *gabben or feynen heere men shulden not trowe hem in þis, but haue hem suspect of errour, siþ þey suen not crist in þis. for crist was neuere axid questioun þat ne he suyde his godhed & made aseep vpon resoun to hem þat axiden þis questioun of hym. & þus shulden kyngis axe þe pope hou he groundiþ þis dowing on crist, & to robbe þus reumes, & to make hym prelatis at his wille, siþ crist tauȝte his apostlis to chese mathy bi lot. & þis principle of bileue shulden prestis holde & lerne goddis lawe, & not obesche to pope or bishop but in þat þat crist groundiþ it; & in þis cause þey may chalenge help of þer erþely lord, &, ȝif hem faylide help heere, be redy to suffere martirdom. & ciprian made þis lawe, & it is in þe popis bokis, þat crist onely shulde be herd in þat þat he spekiþ moost principaly. & þus siþ neþer popis ne bishopis kunnen grounde bi crist þis curatis offiss, ne þat þey shulden þus make persouns, þe chirche shulde aȝenstonde hem & turne aȝen to goddis lawe in þe lyuyng of curatis. & it falliþ to kyngis heere to ordeyne þes prelatis bi goddis lawe, for þey shulden quykene þe kyngis puple & helpe þat þe kyng ledde not deuels. & siþ þis is þe fouleste offiss þat men han heere in erþe, kyngis shulden helpe & mayntene þer curatis aȝenus anticrist & hise; & þus ȝif þis bileue of poul were wisely suyd of clerkis & defendid of worldly lordis, as þey ben holdun to defende it, errours of reumes shulden be destried þat ben brouȝt in bi anticrist. for wise curatis shulden aȝenstonde it & seculer lordis shulden mayntene hem, & þus noon errour in goddis lawe reyngnyþ but for foly of clerkis, & for slouþe of worldly lordis þat helpen not heere aȝenus þe fend. & þus of alle worldly godis þat clerkis han in þer hond, boþe clerkis & pore men shulden be lordis of þes godis, for þey shulden

*[p. 196 MS.]

Christ always gave a reasonable answer to questions.

Priests should not obey pope or bishop without Christ's authority.

Kings should appoint prelates.

All these evils come from folly of the clergy and sloth of lords.

lyue in grace & haue of hem þat hem nedip; & no drede þes two shulden be goostly lordis & not worldly. & many men may be to-gedere þus goostly lordis of o þyng, & haue vss þat acordip to hem of þe same þing wiþ-uten chiding, as seyntes þat ben in heuene han vss of alle þes worldly godis, but þey wasten not þes godis but han ioie þat goddis wille is don of hem; & þis is þe freest vss þat men han off worldly godis. & þus ȝif þis principle of bileue were wel practisid of þe chirche, goddis lawe shulde turne aȝen & mannus lawe shulde be dispisid, for no dedis shulden be acceptid but ȝif þey ben groundid in cristis lawe, & so alle maner of men *shulden *stonde in ground of crist & his lawe.

Lordship of the clergy should be spiritual, as is that of the saints in heaven.

*[p. 20 MS.]

Capitulum 31^m.

i t were for to wite ouer þis hou cristis chirche is disseyued bi suppiyng of vikeris, & þes persouns ben absent þe while. for þes persouns moten nedis serue crist or in doynge wel or in sufferinge, & herfore þey han of cristis chirche þer large hire of goddis godis. ech sicke persoun mut nedis answer bi resoun to god for alle his sheep, but mannus lawe bigilip not god to answer þus for herdis offiss, & þerfore it mut be groundid in goddis lawe to holde þus residense bi vikere. but it semyþ certeyn of goddis lawe þat noon may teche þis bi resoun to be þus herde of þes sheep, & to be þus absent fro hem; & herfore it semyþ not but to be a feynyng of þe fend. & þerfore þis herdis floc may resonably wiþ-drawe his hire for he trauelip not on hem bi þat lawe þat he axip his hire. & cursing is a fendis fynding to curse men þus for worldly godis; for þanne hauyng of þes godis is more desirid þan blessing of þer sheep; but who may holde charite & þus chese þis worldly hauyng? for a man shulde loue more his sheep þan alle his godis or his body, siþ he shulde putte his lif for his sheep, as crist dide. & þis moueþ many men to sette litil bi sicke cursing; for whanne man curseþ vn-

Absent curates and their vicars.

The curate is responsible for his flock,

and by God's law may not absent himself.

The flock may withdraw his hire if he neglects his work.

To curse for tithes shows more care for money than for the flock.

To employ a vicar does not excuse the curate to God.

Prayer and study alone are not the work of a curate.

*[p. 206 MS.]

A parson that does his duty may be sometimes absent.

Hirelings say that if a parson may be absent a few days, why not more?

Hard to blame a man who absents himself to study God's law.

skilefully, he cursiþ hym silf & not his sheep. also þre offiss of goostly herde moten haue his presence wiþ his sheep; for who can preche to his sheep, or defende hem fro wolues, or heele hem as curatis shulden, but ȝif he be present wiþ his sheep? & þus siche residense bi viker makip hym to leese herdis offiss & þis excusiþ hym not to god, ne his seruuyss in þe mene tyme makip hym herde of þes sheep, ne worþy to take þis hire of god. ȝif he waste tyme in þis absence & profite not to hooly chirche, þys los of tyme accusiþ hym bifore crist, þe firste herde. ȝif he do good to þe chirche in preiyng or in studiynge, leue, what is þis to herdis offis, al ȝif it dispose men þerto. men may wel ȝyue to siche þer almes, but not as to herdis of hem. & siþ god hatip falsed of men, þis shulde not be don bifore god. & siþ a man in no staat shulde do ouȝt þat he shamede to do bifore god, it semyþ þat no man shulde holde þis offiss & be absent in his body. & þus men ben not contynuel herdis for þe tyme þat þey ben absent & kepen not þer sheep bi þer presence, al ȝif þey profiten to þes men. for *ech man þat is in grace profitip to ech able man goostly, & þus ech siche were herde of ech, but þis abusioun were to straunge. ȝif a man be presently nyȝ his sheep, & fayle not to fede hem & to defende hem & to gresse hem in tyme, his bodily presense is skileful to hym to dwelle vpon þes sheep. & þus þe persoun þat al þe wouke disposiþ hym to preche to his sheep or to defende hem & gresse hem, so þat his absense be resonable, dwellip a shepparde al þis tyme; & his presence doiþ his cure & counfortip his sheep & febliþ þer enemyes. & as glotouns arguen þat bi þe same skile þey may ete more til þat þey han etun to myche, so hirid hynes arguen heere þat, bi þe same skile þat þey may be absent fro þes sheep foure dayes or¹ fyue, þey may be absent for a moneþe or an half ȝeer or more tyme: & þis resoun haþ more colour of herdis þat studien in scole. & y can-not answer heere ȝif men studien goddis lawe, & in þe mene tyme failen

not to þer sheep in þingis þat perteynen to þer offiss. but for
 bodily residense of an able herde vpon his sheep is more sikir But it is safer
to reside.
 þan siche absence, it is good to chese þe sikere. also as poul
 seiþ, ech man shal bere his oune charge, & þus þe viker of þis
 herde is chargid for his oune persone as myche as he may
 bere, hou beriþ he þe persouns charge? For in tyme of In apostolic times
there were no
limitations to
special cures.
 apostlis þat iurisdiccoun was not brouȝt in, but oon shulde
 preche in o tyme & an-oþer in an-oþer; alle þes weren
 persouns of þes sheep & he þat more tauȝte was betere curat.
 & þus it semyþ þat it shulde be of many persones of o pariȝs,
 & þat persoun þat profitiþ more is betere herde to þis pariȝs.
 for ellis men myȝten feyne falsly as many herdis as þey
 wolden, & echoon to pile þe puple where oon sufficide for Parishes are
burdened by the
many grades of
clergy and offi-
cials.
 hem alle. as prest & viker & persoun, official, erchedekene
 & bischop, wiþ many men bitwixe hem, ben ful chargious to
 þe pariȝs, & þei alle don not þe offiss þat a good herde shulde
 do; but siche charging of þe chirche shulde be fled as greet
 synne. for it is nouȝt to bigile god & make an vnhable man
 persoun þat can-not on herdis cure but his sheep kunnen
 gouerne hym, al ȝif he gedere bi a proctour þe fruytis, as If all a parson
need do is to
gather the tithes
by a proctor, a
child or a Greek
might be parson.
 offeringis & dymes. for ellis a child or a greke or what offis
 þat he bare myȝte be persoun heere in englond ȝif þe pope
 hadde ȝouyn hym leue, but siche þat is not goddis orde-
 naunse excusiþ not at domes day.

Capitulum 32^m.

b y þis sentence may men se hou þis prelacye is perelous
 for it is not fully groundid in crist *ne in oþer of his *[p. 21 MS.]
 lawis. for þe fend haþ mouyd men bi pride & bi The devil moves
men to undertake
more than they
can do.
 coueytise forto bihete þat þey wolen do more þan þey han
 power or wit to do; for take þou hede to oure popis, to
 bischops & to oure persouns, and þey reckon litil of þer They do not care
how great their
charge is if they
can make money
by it.
 charge hou myche it be & hou large, so þat hem come
 wynnyng & worldly worship bi þer staat. & so siþ þe

staat of prelacye takiþ sumwhat of goddis lawe & sumwhat of mannus lawe contrarie to goddis lawe, trewe men shulden purge þis staat & lyue clene bi goddis lawe. for saracenes wiþ opere sectis holden myche of cristis lawe, but opere lawis þat þey meddlen maken þis sect displese to god; & god woot wher straunge lawis ben meddlid more vndir oure pope wiþ cristis lawe þan þey ben meddlid in opere sectis. it semyþ þat prestis þat kepen parijschis shulden teche hem þe gospel of crist boþe bi lif & bi word, & moue hem to holde charite, & bisie hem not in opere þingis neþer of þe world ne mannus lawe, & make obediense to þer prelatis as myche as goddis lawe techiþ. fode & hiling moten þey haue; & it is skileful þat þer parijs fynde hem þese bi title of almes, & take þey no more hede to dymes. but þis lif mut nedis be brouȝt in bi litil & litil for anticrist. & þis lore were good to persouns, to ȝyue no tribut to þer prelatis & make no straunge dispensis but ȝif goddis lawe mouyde þer-to. for alle þes dispensis at þe laste moten be gederid of pore men; & certis þis is a foul offiss of a prest to robbe his puple to ȝyue to bischop or erchedekene godis þat god biddiþ not. as senage & procurasies, & opere tributis þat ben feyned, ben not groundid in goddis lawe & þerfore men shulden dispise hem. ȝyuyng of taliage to þe kyng is licly groundid in goddis lawe, for crist ȝaf mekely to þe emperour tribut, as þe gospel seiþ, but he ȝaf not to þe hye bischops ne pharisees ne saducees. but sicke curatis moten arme hem wiþ help of god & of trewe men, for cursingis & suspendingis wolen renne aȝenus sicke curatis. siþ bischops of ierusalem maden crist be cursid & suspendid for þey seiden he was not on goddis half but wiþ belsebub a prince of deuels, & þey puttiden men out of synagoge þat confessiden crist apertly, & aftir þei suspendiden hym in þe cros ful felly. þis hangyng vp vsid nou is not so fel but fals ynow; for þey wolen hange vp treuþe & mayntenynge of goddis lawe; & þei ponderen wiþ þis suspending þat þei don it for riȝtwiseesse to teche curatis obedience & meke-

Saracens hold much of Christ's law, but have mixed other laws with it.

So have the popes.

Priests should be kept in food and clothing by the parish, and care no more about tithes.

The people are robbed to pay fees.

It is lawful to pay taxes to the king.

Good curates must expect persecution.

They may be suspended;

nesse bi goddis lawe, & al þis is falsly feyned bi anticristis
 *ipocrisie. but trewe prestis shulden trowe heere þat neþer *[p. 21b MS.]
 þe word of þer prelat ne þe word of þer somenour han so
 myche maliss wiþ hem þat ne þey may preche & serue god but they should
 aftir þis suspending. & þe moost harm þat þei don is priuyng of suspension.
 or sleyng; & þis shulden curatis mekely suffere, for þis wolde
 turne hem to myche good. & summen tellen wiþ myche
 declaring þat ground of þis hepen custom springiþ in þe The pope is at the
 chirche of þe pope & of þe floce groundid on hym. & ȝit þis bottom of this
 man bi ipocrisie seiþ þat he sueþ nexst crist of alle þe men heathen custom.
 heere in erþe, & haþ moost power of crist & of feynyng of þis He claims to re-
 power; hou he presentiþ cristis persone & passiþ alle cristis present Christ;
 apostlis in graunting of priuylegies & pardoun, it passiþ many
 mennus wit for greetnesse of þis power. & summen seyn þat
 þis speche falliþ not fro fendis gabbing but ȝif þe pope speke but it must be by
 bi þe contrarie, as a mount haþ his name of mouyng, for contraries (as a
 among alle men in erþe þis ipocrite lyueþ ferrest fro crist. mount is so called
 crist hadde not propre good wher-ynne he shulde reste his from moving).
 hed; men seyn þis pope haþ more þan half of þe empire Contrasts be-
 wiþ-uten his spuyling. crist was moost meke & moost tween Christ and
 seruysable & girte hym wiþ a cloþ & wayschide his disciplis the pope.
 feet, as þe gospel of ioon telliþ; þe pope sittiþ in his troone
 & mak iþ lordis to kisse his feet. crist wente mekely fro plase
 to place & prechide þe gospel & tauȝte pouert; þe pope
 dwelliþ in auynoun & doiþ not þis but þe contrarie. & so Pope dwells
 siþ þat anticrist is he þat is aȝenus crist, it semyþ bi his at Avignon.
 feyned lif þat he is opyn anticrist. & ȝif he shulde be clepid
 an hil for stablenesse in þis lif, þis hye hil eclipsiþ þis sunne He is a hill that
 & mak iþ wyndis & yuele wederis; for goddis lawe is lettid eclipses the sun
 to shyne bi lawis þat þis hil vsiþ, & coolding fro charite (Christ).
 mak iþ stormes bi þis hil; but grace of god haþ helpid men God has helped
 to cleue þis hil & make it knowun, & god contynue his help man to cleave
 heere & make his lawe to shyne frely. Amen. this hill.

Explicit tractatus de officio pastoralis.

XXVIII.

DE PAPA.

I HAVE no doubt that this tract is genuine. Besides the presumption in its favour from its occurrence in the Ashburnham MS., the internal evidence is very strong. Not only the views are Wyclif's; the arguments and illustrations are such as he frequently uses in his authentic writings. Thus the mention of a cord and a man's neck (p. 476), as examples of things good in themselves that may be bad in combination, is to be found also in the Trialogus (p. 306).

The date of the tract is probably about 1380. The reference to the doctrine of Transubstantiation shows that Wyclif had already made up his mind on this point, but the Schism is spoken of (Chapter II.) in a tone which implies that it was still recent. Spencer's Crusade was not yet on foot, or we should have had some notice of it.

How far Wyclif had gone in opposition to the formal organization of the Church is shown by his assertion (Chapter v.) that neither tonsure, dress, nor bishop's words make the priest, but power given by Christ. The development of the same thought in Chapter XI. shows that this is no hasty outburst, but a deliberate expression of opinion.

Copied from the Ashburnham MS. MM.

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De Papa.

*[p. 25 MS.]

**Capitulum primum.*

[Jer. xxv. 4.]
God sent his prophets to declare his law, but men would not hear.

Prov. i. [20-28.]

Some priests think they are bound to teach God's law.

Christ was the poorest of men, and Peter followed him.

The devil has got the clergy to hold lordship.

god seiþ bi ieremye þat he wakide eerly to his puple & criede his lawe bi his prophetis, þat weren martrid in goddis cause & for profit of his chirche, boþe for clerkis, lordis & comyns. but god seiþ by salomon þat his wisdom cryeþ in stretis but men dispisen his counsel & wolen not lyue bi his lore, & þerfore god shal leyze in þe tyme þat þey shulen perische; þanne þei shulen crie to hym & he shal not here & spede hem. þus god moueþ many men in tyme of grace to telle his lawe; & ȝit anticrist dispisiþ it & lordis ben negligente in þer help. & for prestis faylen heere on þer syde, as opere men don, summe prestis þenken þat þey shulden crye & telle goddis lawe to þe puple; for it may falle þat þey boþe shulen perische for þer negligense. ground of cristenmennus bileue seiþ þat crist is god & man, & was porerste man of lif & mekerste & moost vertuouse. cristenmen taken ouer þat petre was cristis viker, & suyde hym in maner of lif & tauȝte þe chirche bi his lore. þe fend hadde enuye to crist & opere men þat suyden hym, & temptide prestis to worldly lordchipis as he temptide crist in his persone &, as he liȝede in þis tempting & seyde þat he wolde ȝyue to crist alle þe reumes of þe world so þat he wolde loute hym, so bi craft of his lesingis he haþ getun lordchip to clerkis. so þat nou myche of þis world holdiþ on anticristis syde; as many seyen þat þe pope shulde bi vertu of cristis lif be seculer lord of al þis world, & bi his leue kyngis ben lordis. & þe fendis part is heere so strong & colourid wiþ so many cautels þat fewe men doren putte hem out to stonde & speke for goddis cause. but ȝit men trowen, as þei doren, þat crist chees to be pore to ȝyue ensauple to his prestis & opere men to triste in god, & leue to triste in

þis world for þey moten dye & leue it. & petre was pore
 aftir crist, & alle þe apostlis but scarioth, for he wolde be
 riche & haue in propre, & þis brouȝt hym to double deþ.
 but þe fend haþ blyndid men, boþe clerkis & lordis, in þe
 chirche þat þey bileuen þe contrarye; & þis defaute in bileue
 reuersiþ cristenmennus lif, & lettij hem to sue crist. for þe
 fend coueytij myche to quenche bileue in þe chirche, for þis
 is þe firste vertu & ground of cristis religioun. & for þe pope
 is holdun moost & nexst viker of iesu crist, þerfore þe fend
 in þe pope haþ gederid many worldly poyntis *boþe of
 lordchip & worldly lif, & castij to disseyue þe chirche by
 hym. For manye taken as bileue þat he may not do amys,
 but what þing þat he grauntij or seiþ crist mut conferme it;
 & bi þis cautel of þe fend ben many men dampnyd to helle.
 & ground of al þis disseyt is lesing contrarye to treuþe;
 for as þe fend disseyuede eue bi lesing þat she shulde not dye,
 whanne god hadde seyð þat she shulde dye what day þat she
 eet of þe appul, so þe fend disseyueþ þe chirche bi oon as opyn
 lesing, þat crist was heere worldly lord moost hye of alle
 opere, & so shulde his viker be þat is clepid þe pope of rome.
 but whanne crist was temptid heere he seyde: “go, satanas.”
 to teche alle cristenmen hou þat crist wolde be pore; & ȝit
 þer ben fewe men þat wolen defende þis bileue, for anticrist
 haþ many clerkis þat maken it derk bi many weyes.

The devil has
brought together
*[p. 25b MS.]
many deceits in
the Pope.

Many believe
that the Pope
cannot err.

People are led
to believe that
Christ held
worldly lord-
ship, and that
the Pope
should do so.

Capitulum 2^m.

i t were to wite ouer hou god shewij loue to his chirche
 bi dyuysioun of þes popis þat is nou late fallun. oure
 bileue techij bi poul þat alle þingis fallen to good
 to goddis children þat dreden hym, & þus shulden cris-
 tenmen take hem. þe firste bok of goddis lawe tellij hou
 god manaasside þe fend: “y shal putte enemyte,” seiþ god,
 “bitwixe þee & womman, & bitwixe þy seed & heere seed,
 & she shal al to-squatte þyn heed.” & so taken summen þat

God's love to his
Church shown in
the Great Schism.

Rom. viii. [28.]

[Gen. iii. 15.]

Some men think that in answer to prayer he has thus broken the head of Antichrist.

The Pope is Antichrist since he is opposed to Christ in life and teaching.

Christ was poor; the Pope loves riches.

Christ was meek; the Pope is proud.

Christ was familiar;

the Pope shuts himself up in a castle.

Christ went to **[p. 26 MS.]* others; the Pope summons men to come to him.

Christ was busy in preaching;

the Pope busies himself in making laws which he sets above Christ's.

Christ gave his life for his flock;

the Pope gives sham absolution to men who do him honour, and so causes death in body and soul to thousands.

Christ prayed for his enemies; the Pope revenges himself both by slaying and cursing.

hooly preyer of þe chirche maad to crist & his modir moueþ hym to sende þis grace doun to departe þe heed of anticrist, so þat his falsed be more knowun. & it semeþ to hem þat þe pope is anticrist heere in erþe. for he is aȝenus crist boþe in lif & in lore. crist was moost pore man fro his birþe to his deþ, & lefte worldly richees & beggyng, aftir þe staat of innocense; but anticrist aȝenus þis, fro þe tyme þat he be maad pope til þe tyme þat he be deed heere, coueytiþ to be worldly riche, & castiþ bi manye shrewid weyes hou þat he may þus be riche. crist was moost meke man & bad lerne þis of hym; but men seyen þat þe pope is moost proud man of erþe, & makiþ lordis to kysse his feet where crist wayschide his postlis feet. Crist was moost homely man in lif, in dede & in word; men seyen þat þis pope is not nextst crist in þis, for where crist wente on his feet boþe to citees & litil tounnes, þey seyen þis pope wole be closid in a castel wiþ greet aray. Where crist cam to ioon baptist to be baptisid of hym, þe pope sendiþ *aftir men to come to hym where euere he be; ȝe, ȝif crist haue sumnyd hem for to come not to hym. crist bicliptide ȝonge & pore in tokene of his homelynesse; men seyen þat þe pope wole biclippe worldly worchip, & not trewe men for goddis sake lest he vnworchiþe hym silf. crist was bisy to preche þe gospel not for his worldly worchip ne wynnynge; men seyen þat þe pope leeueþ þis, but he wole gladly make a lawe & make þis lawe in more worchip & more drede þan cristis lawe. crist louede so myche his floc þat he puttide his lif for hem, & sufferide sharp peyne & deþ for to brynge hem to blis; men seyen þat þe pope loueþ so myche worchip of þe world, þat he wole feyne asoyling to men to go streyȝt to heuene, so þat þey do a trauel þat sounneþ to his worldly worchip. & so his foly may be cause of deþ of many þousynd men boþe in body & in soule, but hou sueþ he crist in þis? crist was so pacient & so myche sufferide his oune wrong, þat he preyede for his enemyes & tauȝte his postlis to take no veniaunse; men seyen þat þe pope of rome wole be vengid on alle maners, boþe bi

sleyng & bi cursing & opere peynes þat he feyneþ. *crist* Christ taught men to imitate his life;
 tauhte men to lyue wel bi his oune lif & his wordis, for what
 he tauhte he did in dede, & bad men trowe to his werkis; the Pope says that no other man should live as he should.
 men seyen þat þe pope goiþ al bi contrarye weye to þis, for
 his lif is not ensaumpel to opere men hou þey shulden lyue,
 for no man shulde lyue lik to hym, as he feyneþ bi his hye Christ sought God's glory;
 staat. *crist* in ech his dede & his word souhte þe glory of
 god, & sufferide many reprocus in his manheed for þis ende; the Pope seeks his own glory.
 men seyen þat þe pope aȝenward sekiþ his oune glory on alle
 weyes, ȝe, ȝif goddis worchip be lost. & þus he feyneþ many
 vngroundid gabbingis. & ȝif þis þing & many sicche ben soþe
 of þe pope of rome, he is very *anticrist* & not *cristis* viker
 heere.

Capitulum 3^m.

þ is dyuysioun of þes popis may turne to good of many The Schism may teach men to obey Popes only as they follow Christ.
 reumes, þat men trowe to noþer of hem but, for loue of
 iesu crist, in as myche as þey suen crist in þer lif & in þer
 lore. for ȝif þei gabben of þer staat & seyen þat þei ben
 cristis vikeris, & þey ben contrarye to hym boþe in lif & in
 lore, *þo men þat ben led bi þes wolues moten go þe brode *[p. 26b MS.]
 weye to helle; & þis semeþ þe perelous tyme þat poul haþ
 teld to þe chirche. & þus þis were a bileue þat ech man Men should follow this rule.
 shulde grounde hym ynne, þat men shulden trowe to no pope
 but as he groundiþ hym in crist; & men shulden asaye þis
 ground, wher it be good wiþ-oute disseyt. & þus what þe
 pope bade do, but ȝif he tauhte þat crist bade it, men shulden
 not do þis aftir hym in þat þat he were cristis viker, for it
 may falle þat þe fend disseyue men bi *anticrist*, & chalenge Popes may make excessive claims and cause strife.
 more þan crist dide & þus bringe strif in cristendom. for þe
 fend may moue mennus hertis to loue so myche worldly
 godis þat þey stryue & fiȝte to-gidere for departing of þes
 godis; & þus may *anticrist* & hise lette men to lyue in pees, They may stir up trouble to hide their tricks.
 lest þat þis lif in pees make men to knowe his giles. & þus
 god haþ ordeyned medicyn to knowe falsed of *anticrist*, þat

he hieþ hym aboue crist, & so ouer god, as poul seiþ.

Countries should obey popes no further than God's law warrants.

profere reumes to þes popis þat þey wolen obesche to hem in þe foorme of goddis lawe, but no more þan crist axide; & ȝif þey ben not payed her-of, þey shewen þat þey ben anticrist, siþ þe mooste pride of hym is þat he hieþ hym aboue god.

Thus realms would be quit of indulgences.

& ȝif reumes holde þis reule, þanne þey may be dischargid of blasfemyes of indulgensis, & of oþere false feynynngis; for it may falle þat þe pope graunte to riche worldly men þat þey shulen go streiȝt to heuene wiþ-oute peyne of purgatorye, & denye þis to pore men, kepe þey neuere so goddis lawe. sicke many giles of þe fend blynden men bi his viker, so þat treuþe of

If men would stand to the rule, the Pope would draw no money from the realm.

goddis lawe is turnyd in-to þis vikeris falseed. & shortly for to seye, ȝif men stonden bi þis bileue, þe pope shal not take of reumes neþer money ne worldly godis. & herfore seiþ poul, cristis vikere, þat he sekiþ þes grekis soulis & he sekiþ not her godis, but weye to brynge hem to blis. & no drede þus doiþ crist to alle reumes þat ben his children, for he robbiþ not his children, but ȝyueþ hem alle maner godis, boþe goostly godis & worldly. & þus dide crist heere in erþe, & ȝif þe pope passe heere crist & robbe his children as a wolf, no drede he is anticrist & opynly þe fendis viker. & ȝif þou seyst þe pope mut haue godis of reumes to saue his *staat, he shulde be pore, as crist was, & charge not men, as crist dide not. þis reule shulde teche men where a prelat were anticrist, & hou þey shulden obesche to hym, & in what þing leeuē his lore.

*[p. 27 MS.]

Capitulum 4^m.

Christian men should choose their prelates and love them.

s iþen ech seculer cristenman shulde willefully chese his prelat, & loue hym bi goddis lawe as men louyden in þe firste staat, þat was staat of innocense, as alle men shulden haue louyd þanne, & men shulen loue in staat of blis, for þere shal loue be at þe fulle; herfore shulden men seke weyes to loue þat man þat shulde be pope. & among causis of loue þe mooste cause þat euere god ordeynede shulde be

Men should try to love the Pope.

good doyng of men; for bi þis cause god makip hym silf
louyd, & hem more louyd þat more don good. þe good þat
þe pope shulde do shulde be lore to come to heuene, & so þis
pope mut kunne þis lore ouer oþere þat ben his sheep; & siþ
þis lore is fully tauzt in goddis lawe, as we bileuen, þis pope
mut passingly kunne goddis lawe & resoun þer-of. but nou
in þe reume of england stryuen manye of þe sacrid oost.
summe seyen þat þis oost fro þe tyme þat it be sacrid is
verily goddis body & þer-wip breed, whit & round; & in þis
weye stonden lewid men boþe more & lesse, & longe han don.
oþere seyen þat þis oost is nouzt or an accident, þe which þey
kunnen not nemyn to men, but it is not goddis body. þis
questioun shulden reumes sende to þe pope, to knowe his wit,
what we shulden trowe of þis oost fro þe tyme þat it be
sacrid; & here-ynne shulde he not feyne but teche bi þe
gospel or bi resoun what men shulden bileue heere, or ellis he
were no witty pope. & þes reumes shulden take no man to
þer pope bifore þat tyme þat he hadde tauzt hem wel heere
by good ground of goddis lawe. For wel we witen þat he
kan heere no skile but of cristis word; but crist, whanne he
blesside þis breed, seyde þat "þis is my body"; & we
bileuen þat crist liþde neuere, but seyde euere soþ to greet
witt. & ȝif foure sectis in þis lond seyen heere soþ of þe
popis lawe, he haþ seyð many hundrid wynter þat þis oost is
not goddis body, but accident wip-oute suget. & ȝif reumes
leeuen þis lore & taken hem anticrist to pope, he may make
hem to bileue what euere he wole bi litil & litil; for hooly
chirche haþ bileuyd þis þousinde *wynter & more to, þat
þis oost is goddis body in foorme of breed, & wyn his blood.
& trewe men shulden knowe heere þat þis poynt is not so hye
þat ne þey may wite þe soþe, & knowe it betere þan oþere
poyntis þat crist haþ tauzt in oure bileue. heere may
cristenmen soone wite which clerk or lord louep treuþe & haþ
wille to stonde þerfore & suffere a magrey ȝif he shulde.
& certis þat pope þat faylip heere oþer for kunnyng or for
wille is vnhabable to take to pope & lede his floc bi goddis

To earn their
love he must
teach God's law.

Discussions as to
the nature of the
host.

Countries should
make the Pope
say what he
thinks on this
matter.

Christ said the
bread was his
body.

The four sects
say that the pope
holds it to be an
accident without
subject.

*[p. 27b MS.]

If so, he is unfit
to be Pope.

No harm in discussing this truth.

Lords should give no alms to priests who do not teach the truth in this.

It is idolatry to bow down before an accident.

lawe. & what sect grucchiþ *azenus* þis is suspect of heresy, for what shulde it harme ony man þat þis treuþe were wel discussid. but it were good to cristenmen to laste in þer olde bileue, þat þis breed is goddis body & þis wyn is goddis blood, & not an vnknowun þing wiþ-oute resoun or autorite; for men shulden holde þer olde bileue but ȝif þe contrarye were wel tauȝte. & þus it were a blessid dede þat lordis wolden not ȝyue þer almes neþer to o prest ne oþer, bifore þey tauȝten bi good witnesse what þing were þis sacrid oost, boþe in his kynde & in figure, by maner þat þe gospel spekiþ. & þus ȝif god wolde fouche-saf, hooly chirche shulde be purgid of heresy, in þis mater, aboute which þey dispenden myche, as in prestis þat syngen masse; & certis it were ydolatrye to loute þus an accident. & no man durste seye til nou þat accident is goddis body, for þis newe word may haue no ground, & was not knowun þat þousinde ȝeer þat sathanas was boundun in helle, & ȝit he shameþ to seye þis gabbing.

Capitulum 5^{tum}.

Antichrist fears that his clerks will lose honour

and the Church, that has been long growing, will be destroyed.

This means that Christ's law was a failure.

b ut heere grucchiþ anticrist & dredip þat manye of his clerkis shulen wante þer worldly worchip, & þus his lordchip shal be lesse. for ȝif goddis lawe were kept clene wiþ-oute þe fendis lawe, & þe ordenaunse of crist were clene wiþ-uten anticristis, where shulden þes foure sectis be lordis as þey nou ben? & þus þe chirche were destried þat haþ be so longe in growing. Heere han trewe men seyde ofte þat þis is a fendis resoun, as ȝif þe arguere wolde mene þat crist faylide in his lawe & in his ordenaunse which he ordeynede in þe chirche, & þus men menen alle in dede þat ben of þes foure sectis. but, lord, where is vnbileue in heretik but ȝif þis be oon? & þus it semeþ þat alle þes foure smacchen sumwhat of heresy, & þey louen not iesu crist, for þey haten þus his lawe. but poul seiþ a soþ word þat * "who euere loueþ not iesu crist he is cursid of god,

1 Cor. xvi. [22.]

*[p. 28 MS.]

& puttid fro hym as heretik." & so þe mooste inconuenient þat anticrist kan bringe of þis is þat cristis lawe were holdun clene wiþ-uten anticristis; but þis fruyt were blessid & profitable to þe chirche. for þis kepte crist in his apostlis, & þanne cam þe chirche to heuene & growide in vertus heere in erþe; & siþen haþ it sunkun doun. þanne shulden cristenmen knowe þe vertu of crist & of his lawe; hou þat he is god almyȝty & his lawe is fully ynow; & þanne shulden men wite aftir hou opere lawes, þat men han foundun, harmen þe chirche many weyes, & maken goddis lawe lesse louyd. For keping of þes newe lawis occupieþ mennus witt & wille, & axiþ of hem a bisy trauel, & þus þey letten goddis lawe. & þus ȝif anticristis lawe were good, ȝit cristis lawe mut nedis be betere & sufficient in hym silf; & þus þe toþer is to myche & doiþ harm in cristis chirche, & lettib cristis lawe to be suyd. & þus bringing in of þes lawis, þat lettib þe vse of cristis lawe, is þe mooste priuey synne þat þe fend haþ foundun aȝenus þe chirche. & so þis blessid word wolde sue, þat foure sectis newe foundun shulden be voydid fro þe chirche, as þey shulen not come to blis. for alle þes sectis han mannus signes, & ȝif þes signes weren fully stryed, þes sectis weren þanne destried, as men seyen þat ben weddid wiþ hem. but it is not so of cristis sect ne of prestis þat crist ordeynede. for ioon baptist was a prest, as alle men in heuene shulen be prestis. for croune & cloþ maken no prest, ne þe emperours bischop wiþ his wordis, but power þat crist ȝyueþ; & þus bi lif ben prestis knowun. & þus cristenmen shulden not lette for þe drede of þe fend & for power of his clerkis to sue & holde cristis lawe. but wel y woot þat þis chirche haþ be many day in growing, & summe clepen it not cristis chirche, but þe chirche of wickid spiritis. & dauyþ hatide þis chirche as ech cristenman shulde do. & man may no betere knowe anticristis clerk þan bi þis, þat he loueþ þis chirche & hatib þe chirche of criste; & ȝif þe pope be an heed to mayntene þis chirche aȝenus crist, he is opyn anticrist & no part of cristis chirche. & ȝif *he & his secte be voyde *

The worst that would happen would be the keeping of Christ's law.

New laws hurt the Church,

and hinder God's law.

These sects owe their being to human inventions.

Neither crown, dress, nor ordination makes the priest.

[Psalm xxvi. 5.]

*[p. 286 MS.]

Luke xi. [25.] fro cristis lawe, & clensid wiþ besumms, & maad fair wiþ sensible signes, þanne þe fend haþ a tokene to dwelle homely wiþ þes men; for þes ben wordis of crist, þe whiche moten nedis be trewe. & þus shulde anticrist drede of þe word þat crist seiþ aftir, þat þis kynrede of prestis is þe worste of alle opere. for many men trowen heere þat as prestis in þe olde lawe, fro þe time of machabees vnto þat þei hadden slayn crist, weren þe worste kynrede þat god sufferide þanne to lyue; so aftir cristis steyng, ȝif prestis leeuē cristis lawe & bicomē reuleris of þis world by newe lawis þat þey han shapun, þis is nou þe worste kynrede þat is on lyue heere in erþe.

Priests that bear secular rule are the worst of men.

Capitulum 6^{um}.

Antichrist urges that the Pope would be poorer than an English bishop.

it anticrist argueþ þat ȝif þis sentense wente forþ, þe pope were as pore a man as ony bischop of englond; but þis were aȝenus resoun, þat þe hiere man shulde be byneþe. Heere men seyen to anticrist þat he argueþ aȝenus crist, & þerfore cristenmen moten nede answeere sharply heere for crist; for ȝif þis folȝ wente forþ, siþ crist was moost pore man & his apostlis pore aftir, þey weren leest worþ in þis world. but what blasfeme durste seye þus, siþ it is aȝenus bileue. & þus goddis lawe techiþ þat willeful pouert of a prest, ȝif he haue mekenesse in his soule & opere vertues more þan opere, he is herby more to god, & þis hyennesse shulden prestis coueyte. & þus alle prestis of englond shulden be pore men, as þe pope, for þey moten forsake þer richees ȝif þey wolen be cristis prestis. for bileue techiþ wel þat crist bad his prestis be siche; & we fynden neuere bi resoun þat crist chaungide euere his wille. & siþ crist is god in heuene, it is ful hard to reuerse his lawe, for no drede men moten rikene þerfore at þe day of dom. & heere men sliden out of bileue, boþe prestis & seculeris, whanne þey tellen more bi a cronycle of folȝ of an emperour þan þey tellen bi cristis lawe, þat is emperour of heuene. & þe fend confermeþ his part, & makiþ

Christ was the poorest of men.

Luke xiv. [33.]

Men slide out of belief by listening to chronicles instead of Christ's law.

seyntis be canonysed, þe whiche resseyueden siche dowyng, to proue þat þis was wel don. but heere men knowen þe fendis cautels, & sliden not fro bileue for þis; for canonysing of þes seyntis is not bileue of cristenmen. & þus ȝif þes ben seyntes in heuene, þis is bi vertu of crist þat þey turnyden at þe laste to hym, & hadden sorowe for þer synne. & ȝif þou axe prof her-of, we seyen þat ȝif þou proue þat þes be seyntis, it wole sue of oure bileue þat þes seyntis sorowiden þus, ȝif þey weren worldly men þus, for ellis þey myȝten not come to heuene. But myraclis maad of deed men ben þe fendis euydense; for god may suffre *þe fend to do siche signes & many mo. for ellis wolde not poul seye þat a man myȝte remoue hillis & ȝit fayle of charite. but ȝif þes signes myȝten liȝtly fayle, stonde we in bileue of crist, & leue we siche signes of þe fend. for bileue is insensible & more trewe þan siche signes; as þis treuþe is insensible þat two & þre maken fyue, & ȝit it is more certeyn þan ony sensible þing heere. þus bileue of hooly writ passiþ alle þes clepid myraclis. & þus wite wel lordis & reumes þat þey moten nedis answer to god hou þey han holdun his lawe & stondun sad in his bileue. no drede boþe lordis & reumes myȝten wel constreyne prestis to holde þe pouert þat crist ordeynede, for honeste of his prestis & profit of lordis & comyns. & whanne lordis leeuē þis power, þey assenten to þe fend; & þey moten nedis be dampnyd for þis assent but ȝif þey amenden it, & þis is blynding of þe fend þat þey han grauntid þis almes. & so þey moten be trewe men & algatis mayntene it forþ, for ȝif men loken hou it cam in, it cam not in bi very almes, but bi blyndnesse of þe world & ipocrisie þat þe fend tauȝte. & euere þe lengere þat it lastiþ, þe more peyne han deed mennus soulis. & þus þe fend stiriþ men to laste in synne aȝenus god; but wite þey wel wiþ þe fend þat god mut nedis be þer lord. þus ȝif lordis han first be foolis, oþer in dowyng or leeuynge to helpe, þey shulden haue sorowe of þis synne & haaste hem to make aseep. & wite þey wel þat god mut nedis be cheef lord of alle creaturis,

Authority of so-called saints.

If they were saints, they repented of their error.

Miracles of saints no proof. *[p. 29 MS.]

1 Cor. xiii. [2.]

Sensible signs of less weight than insensible belief.

Necessary truths.

Rulers should make priests be poor.

God is chief lord

and they may not
grant without his
leave.

Let rulers amend
the priests.

*[p. 29b MS.]

& but ȝif god graunte hem leue to ȝyue þus prestis þes
worldly godis, þe ȝifte þat þey ȝauen is nouȝt bi vertu of þe
cheef lord. & þus anticrist & al his help can neþer argue
heere ne answeere; & y am certeyn on domes-day no man may
answeere wel heere. þerfore mende hem lordis & reumes,
& serue þei crist for þer goode, for litil seruys for þis tyme
disserueþ myche meede in heuene. lord, siþ lordis & reumes
boþe chesen a pope at þer oune wille, what sholde moue hem
to chese þis pope more hye þan crist wolde challenge of men?
crist axide noon erþly lordchip ne erþly godis, but ȝaf
heuenely, & whanne he tok his oune godis he tok hem for
help of his tenauntis, & algatis in sicke a mesure þat he was
not charious to hem. & þis lore han freris forȝeten & alle
þes oþere newe sectis. þus þe grace *of god haþ mouyd to
trete þis mater among cristenmen, to loke wher þey wolen
helpe hem silf whanne god haþ so graciously bigunnyn.

Capitulum 7^m.

Christ taught
holiness in the
heart.

Now a pope or
prelate must have
pomp.

þer ben groundis þe whiche crist kepte contrarie to keping
of prelatis nou. for crist tauȝte þat hoolynesse shulde
be hid in mennus hertis & not shewid to þe puple in
sensible signes wiþ-oute fruyt; for þanne men hopiden reward
of god & axiden not glory of þis world. but nou it is turnyd
vpsedoun fro religioun þat crist ordeynede, for nou he is
neþer pope ne prelat, but ȝif he haue a worldly meyne þat
shewe his hyennesse to þe world, as he were a seculer lord,
& bi þis gile haþ þe fend brouȝt in þat more prestis shulden
haue worldly glorye. & þis makith þe pope & bischops to axe
richessis to þer staat; for, as þei seyen, þer staat wolde
perische but ȝif sicke richesse shewide it out. first þes
prelatis blasfemen in crist & in his hooly apostlis. for
bileue techiþ vs þat crist was bischop of mennus soulis,
betere bi a þousynd part þan any siþ þe chirche was dowyd,
& so weren cristis apostlis betere þan ony pope of rome.

For þis name is newe foundun, & it bitokeniþ wundirful; for summe þenken it greet wundir þat worldly glory & hoolynesse shulden be knyttid in o persone; siþ crist forsok it in word & dede, & bi his lore his apostlis, lord, why shulden not prelatis do nou so? & by þis cause haþ þe fend brouȝt yn þat religioun of þes newe ordris shal be shewid in sensible signes, as habitis, & bikenes, & hye housis, & herfore haþ þe fend brouȝt in þat cumpany of many lumpis shal be ioyned to o persone for worldly worchip of þer staat. þus þer ben many cardenals & many men knyttid to hem; myche meyne to a bischop, & manye persones in an ordre, & al is charge to comyn men, & strengþe to þe fendis part. crist ordeynede þat his apostlis fro tyme þat he steyede to heuene shulden be scaterid in many cuntreys & conquere wickid men to crist. wel y rede þat seynt petre dwelte in a corieris hous, but y rede not of cardenal ne page þat he hadde wiþ hym; & ȝit þis apostle cam to cornely & conuertide hym wiþ oþere. & þus may cristenmen lerne boþe of crist & his apostlis þat religioun of crist is not in sicke worldly signes. & so men moten oþer denye bileue, or seye þat cristis religioun stondiþ not in sicke signes as nou þe chirche is chargid wiþ. soþ it is *þat seculer prinsis & worldly lordis moten haue sicke worldly signes, for þey shulden teche to drede god by austernete & worldly drede. but it is aȝenus cristis wille þat prestis meddle þes two to-gidere, for þey shulden teche bi mekenesse & paciense, as crist dide. & herfore biddiþ god in his lawe þat his men shulden not be clopid in wollun & lynnun partid to-gidere, to teche þis dyuersite in figure. crist was boþe kyng & prest, as he is boþe god & man, & þus sum þing falliþ to hym þat no cristenman may come to; but in sicke poyntis shulden men lerne to sue bi vertues crist afer, & go not bifore crist, as dide presumpcion of petre; & þerfore crist clepide hym sathanas & bad petre go aftir hym. crist as a goode maystir hadde twelue apostlis to teche hem; anticrist ordeyneþ many twelue to lyue worldly & charge þe chirche. crist koude ensauple kynghod &

Pope a new name; means 'wonderful.'

Religion of the new orders shown in sensible signs.

Men are gathered in 'lumps' to the great charge of the Church.

Acts x. [6.]
St. Peter lived at a currier's without cardinal or page.

*[p. 30 MS.]
Princes may have worldly splendour.

[Deut. xxii. 11.]

Christ was king and priest.
In this none can follow him.

presthod in her groundis, but prestis þat comen aftir crist ben not able to do so; & þus þey passen þer maystir crist, boþe in presthod & in knyȝthod. & þus ȝif popis wolden haue cardenals, þey shulden chese gode men & pore, & loke þat þey chargide not þe chirche bi costly aray & idilnesse; but nou men seyen þat cardenals ben brouȝt yn bi anticrist to bargeyne by symonye, & by oþere disseytis bigile men, & þus as þe pope is wundirful, so cardenals ben an herre to þe fendis hous. & oþere ground han þey noon; but for anticrist wole þus.

Simony and other
deceits in cardinals,

who are hinges
to the fiend's
house.

Capitulum 8^m.

Antichrist urges
that priests do
some good with
their wealth;

they are of the
same nature as
lords, and have
sense to spend
money.

Christ wished his
priests to be out
of temptation,

*[p. 306 MS.]

and set an ex-
ample how they
should live.

it it were to reherse þe euydensis þat anticrist makip to proue þat it were betere clerkis to be riche þan pore as crist; for bi þis richees þei don sum good, & bi so myche þey ben þe betere. for þey ben of mannus kynde, as ben lordis þat han sicke godis, & þey han wit to spende þes godis as han oþere, or ellis more. Why shulden not þey be betere bi þes richessis as oþere ben? Heere men seyen to anticrist þat wolde affeerme crist a fool, as þe fend helde crist a fool for he wolde not take of hym alle þe reumes of þe world for a litil seruyss to hym, þat crist as a good god wolde þat his prestis weren in worchip & fer fro perels of þe fend, & þus he forbad to his prestis to haue to myche of erþly godis & to myche bisynesse aboute hem; but crist ȝaf hem goostly godis & ocupiyng bi charite. & ȝif we marken staat of innocense & staat þat aungels han in heuene, þey shulden not be þus *oppressid wiþ erþely drit as riche men ben, but þey han more clene lif & more likinge to mannus soule. & for þis cause ordeynede crist þat his prestis shulden wante þes richessis, & ensaumplide in hym silf & his apostlis hou þey shulden lyue. crist wolde wel þat his prestis hadden þe vse of worldly godis as myche as wolde do hem good, but not to myche to lette þer soule, as men shulden bifore synne &

aungels han in þer lif. & bi þis vse men shulden haue
goostly lordchip of alle þes godis, & bi þe fruyt of vertues
haue delit in her god. & þus crist ordeynede to prestis moost Priests would have the highest and most perfect state if they would keep Christ's rule.
hye staat & moost parfit of alle þre partis of þe chirche, ȝif
þat prestis wolden lyue þer-aftir; as crist ȝaf to laboreris
worldly godis & trauel also, & crist grauntide to his apostlis
to trauele aboute erþly godis, but he forfendide hem to prynte
þer soulis to myche wiþ erþly godis. crist grauntide to
worldly lordis to haue gouernayle of sicke godis, but he
grauntide to his prestis to gouerne soulis bi weye of vertues;
& þis shulden þey do bi meke wille, & leue lordchip
& austernete. & þis he tauȝte in dede & word for loue þat
he hadde to his prestis. se we nou þe fendis foly, what he
meneþ whanne he argueþ. he wolde mene þat crist was The devil means that Christ was a fool, and too sparing of worldly goods.
a fool & to scars in leste godis. austyn seiþ ofte-tyme þat
þer ben þre godis of man; godis of vertues, & godis of kynde,
& godis of fortune, þat ben þe leste. crist ordeynede men Christ ordained man to be rich in goods of virtue;
to be riche in godis of vertu, for þey ben best; & crist
ordeynede godis of kynde as myche as þey shulden serue to to have enough goods of nature,
þe soule. he ordeynede not so greet a body ne so strong to
a man as haþ an hors or oþer beeste, for it wolde do harm to
þe soule. crist ordeynede godis of fortune þat wolden suffice and of fortune.
to mannus body; & þus he ordeynede godis of vertu wyngis
to men to fle to heuene; ant anticrist wolde faste to men
godis of fortune bi coueytise, þat shulden dreng a man to
helle, & for þis ende he shapiþ þis. wel y graunte þat erþly
godis & worldly lordchipis ben gode, for þei ben goddis Riches are good as God's creatures,
creaturis & shapun of god for good ende. but godis of vertu but virtues are better.
ben þe betere þat prestis shulden haue passingly, & more
perel is in þe firste godis, & þerfore crist wolde not þat his
prestis hadden but litil of þes godis, for perels & letting of
betere godis. & heere shulden worldly men take hede, boþe Secular men should be careful
þe lordis * & þe comyns, þat þey dissusen not worldly godis, *[p. 31 MS.]
but take hem in mesure to þat ende þat crist haþ ordeyned not to misuse goods.
hem to be vsid, & not aȝenus his ordenaunse. crist ȝaf hem
not worldly godis to charge his prestis wiþ þis lordchip, ne to

stire hem to fleysly synnes, as ben gloterye & lecherye; & ȝif þes two partis of þe chirche foulen þus prestis wiþ þes godis, wite þey wel þat god wole punysche boþe þes partis & his prestis. & þus we graunten þat riche prestis don sum good wiþ þis richees, for so don þe fendis in helle wiþ godis þat crist haþ ȝouyn to hem, but neþeles þey don amys; for þey shulden sette al þer bisynesse þat þey han nou in worldly godis to serue crist bi godis of grace, & þis is a greet defaute. We graunten þat prestis ben of mannus kynde, as ben lordis & weddid men, but ȝit þey shulden not haue þis lordchip ne kyndely gendrure of children, but ȝif þey wolden leue þis staat & bcome weddid men, for we bileuen þat maydynhot & goostly gendrure is betere þan þis. & so supposen we þat þes prestis han betere wit þan seculer lordis, applye þey þis betere wit in betere vse to serue god; as beestis han wit to ete & drynke, but prestis wit shulde not stonde in þis, but hou þey myȝten teche men to lyue in vertues bi goddis lawe. but þis may not prestis do bi robbing of lordis & of comyns of þer lordchip & erþely godis; for þis is aȝenus god & man.

Priests are of the same race as lords, but they must not hold lordship or marry.

They should apply their wits to teaching men to live virtuously

Capitulum 9^m.

Antichrist and those that help him should be ashamed.

by þis sentense þat heere is seyð shulden anticrist & hise haue shame to defoule cristis prestis aȝenus þe ordenaunse þat crist made. & worldly lordis & oþere foolis þat helpen anticrist heere shulden haue shame of þis help, as þey shulen shame at domes day; & þis shame shal be more bi colour of ipocrisye, for þey seyen in þes dedis þat þey don þus for cristis worship. for crist ordeynede amys, but worldly lordis amendiden hym, as þe emperour of rome whanne he made his prestis lordis he amendide þe apostlis staat ouer þe ordenaunse of crist. but al þis smacchiþ blasfemye & wole bringe þes lordis doun, as þe emperours staat is lesse for þis dede aȝenus crist. For no man may do aȝenus crist but ȝif he

Worldly lords endowing the clergy are mending Christ's ordinance.

The emperor has been brought down for endowing the Church.

be punysshid for þis dede, but punysshing of *mannus* soule is
 more to drede þan worldly harm. & þus *anticrist* *myzte not *[p. 31b MS.]
 for shame canonyse þis emperour; for it is knowun þing to
 men þat þis emperour reuerside crist. & it semeþ to many
 men þat o cause why he dide þus was to hye his oune prestis, One of Constantine's motives was that his priest might be distinguished above those of other lords.
 wiþ oþer blynd deuocioun; so þat as þe emperour passide
 oþere worldly lordis, so shulde his prest of rome & hise passe
 oþere lordis prestis. & to þis wit he made hym lord of rome
 & myche of his empire, & made hym & his cardenals ride
 in reed on hye ors; for hym þouzte shame þat his clerkis
 shulden not passe clerkis of oþere lordis, but as he passide
 hem bi his empire, so his prest shulde passe oþere. & certis
 þis were an yuel ground to canonyse þis man in heuene; as it He ought not to be canonized.
 were no good cause to charge þe chirche to halewe hym, al ȝif
 he seyde þat ȝif he sawe a prest lie bi a womman he wolde
 hile hem wiþ his mentile, & not sclauendre hem of þis synne.
 ȝif þis emperour be in blis, certis þat is not for þis dede; for Contrast between him and Phinehas.
 fynees was a iust prest, for he stikide þe man & þe womman
 for þer synne aȝenus god, & þus he vengide goddis wrong.
 þis emperour dide many godis, but ȝit men dursten neuere
 hidir-to charge þe chirche to holde his day, & trowe þat he
 were seynt in heuene. & so men seyen of seynt silvester, Silvester may be a saint, but if so he repented of taking endowment.
 þat ȝif god wole he is blissid, but þanne he hadde myche
 sorowe aftir for þis lordchip þat he toke, as seynt petre
 synnede ofte & bi oure feiþ he is nou seynt, but we han no
 sicke feiþ þat siluestre is þus in blis. for it is nede to
 cristenmen to wite what þing is bileue, & to wite what is
 byneþe bileue, & putte not oure troupe in sicke þing. but it
 is liely to many men þat siluestre synnede in his hiyng,
 & petre ne poule ne oþere apostle wolde neuere haue takun
 þis staat; but þe fruyt of his sorowe & oþere gode dedis þat
 he dide, wiþ þe grace of goddis wille, myzten haue maad hym
 seynt aftir. & þus men shewen bi opyn skyle defaute of
anticristis resoun. many þingis ben gode & holsum echone Things may be good separate and yet bad mixed; as priesthood and lordship.
 in his kynde, & þe mynging of þes þingis is vnholsum to man
 to take; so presthod & worldly lordchip ben boþe gode in þer

*[p. 32 MS.]

A cord is a good thing, but tie it round a man's throat and it may strangle him.

kynde, & þe mynging of þes two were venemous, ȝe in þe pope. for þis lordchip *wolde quenche þe pouert þat crist haþ bedun. & a coorde is a good þing, & faste knyitting þer-wiþ is good boþe to man & to beeste in plasis where it wolde do good; but knytte þis coorde to mannus þrote & it myȝte soone strangle þis man. so bynde þou lordchip of þis world to secular men þat han wit & vertu to worche aftir þis lordchip, aftir þe lawe þat crist haþ ȝouyn, & it may do myche good, goddis worchip & his chirchis profit; but knytte þis lordchip to cristis prest & it wole lette hym to speke þe lawe of god & soulis heelp, & strangle hym & many opere. þus alle þe resouns þat þe fend can make aȝenus crist & cristis prestis may be auoydid bi oure feiþ, & make heretikis to shame of hem.

Capitulum 10^m.

Antichrist argues ȝ
that abbeyes and
colleges would be
destroyed if per-
petual alms
ceased.

it argueþ anticrist þat bi þis fel foly perpetual almes in abbeyes & in collegies shulde be destried: but where were more synne? & siþ it is greet meede to do almes for a tyme, it were myche more meede to contynue perpetual almes; & þus charteres of lordis & kyngis of þer perpetual almes shulden be destried, & goostly help þat sueþ þer-of, & no drede þe pope is ground of alle sicke perpetual almes. Heere

It would be better
if there were no
such nests of the
devil.

han trewe men ofte seyð þat it were myche betere þat men lyueden opyn lif þan in sicke nestis of þe fend; for sicke abbeyes & collegies ben hordis of synne to herbore hym.

Matt. vi. [25.]

& herfore seiþ crist in þe gospel þat men shulden not be bisi to þe morowe; but anticrist haþ hardy maner to holde his castel for many ȝeere. & þus þat crist durste not do, ne his apostlis aftir hym, anticrist dare blyndly do in holding of sicke castels, & þis is a fendis cautel þat he haþ brouȝt yn of newe. heritage of erþly lordis goiþ ofte tyme amys whanne tirauntis & goddis traytour's comen eyris aftir gode men; but ȝit god ordeyneþ grace heere, & ordeyneþ summe to wante eyris, & bi many priuey weyes he takiþ yuel fro gode men

Heritage among
secular lords falls
sometimes into
bad hands,

but whanne sicke hord of þe fend is *perpetuald* in o heed, be it good be it yuel, it lastiþ many *mennus* lyues, & it is comynly yuel. for crist hadde but twelue apostlis & ledde hem in trauel & pouert & hooly preching of his word, & ȝit scarioth was a shrewe for al þe vertu þat crist shewide. lord, wher popis & erþly lordis han more vertu þan crist hadde heere? & þus sicke nestis *shulden not be callid **[p. 32b MS.]* perpetual almes of worldly lordis, but dennes of þeues, & nestis of *serpentis*, & homely housis of quye deuels. & þey don harm to cristis chirge bi perpetualte in þer synne; & oþer ground han no men forto founde sicke dennes, but þat crist forfendide hem & shewide þer perel in scarioth. & se þe cautel of þe fend, hou quentely he haþ brouȝt þis yn. he moueþ þes founderis to pride, & seiþ þey ben comun of grete men, þat han foundid perpetual abbeyes in so myche multitude. where is more satanas pride aȝenus mekenesse of iesu crist? for oure bileue techiþ vs þat a man doiþ no lengere merit þan þe while he lyueþ heere in erþe; hou shulde þis meede euere laste? þes founderis sufficiden not to founde þer oune soule in vertues; hou shulden þei þanne suffise to make so longe vertuouse men? & ȝif þer come good of þis ground, pore deed men þat god loueþ bētere han more meede of þis good þan han þes proude founderis. & se hou anticrist & þes lordis stryuen as fendis in þis poynt. anticrist seiþ þat al þis lordchip felde to hym bi title of crist, & so þes lordis ȝauen aȝen 'godis þat þey hadden vniustly holdun, & so þei han no more meede but maken aseep for formere synne; & ȝit þey dwellen ay in synne þe while þei holden ony lordchip fro þe chirche. & þus it is not perpetual almes, but perpetual part of makinge aseep. & certis summe wordis þat heere ben seyd ben soþe, & summe opyn blasfemye, siþen crist, þat is lord of alle, forfendide sicke nestis in þe gospel, & ordeynede to his moost dere children þat þey shulden not haue sicke dwellinge place. & þis he ordeynede for þis ende, þat men shulden coueyte þe place of heuene. & to þe foorme of anticristis skile: he & alle hise kunnen not grounde þat

but this lasts through the lives of many men and mostly bad ones.

Even among the apostles there was an Iscariot.

Names that should be given to monasteries.

The devil stirs men by pride to make such foundations.

A man can do no merit after his death.

Antichrist says that all lordship falls to him by right, so that gifts are only partial restitution.

As to the form of Antichrist's reason.

his was euere ony almes to make þus siche cayms castels. *Solomon's temple was a figure of the Church, but not a model for it.* soþely in þe olde lawe was salomons temple a figure of þe chirche in þe newe lawe, but not þat þe chirche shulde be siche, but fre & large vnder þe cope of heuene, & stonde in vertues of mannus soule; but anticrist wole close it nou in coolde stones þat moten perisshe. & þus þis founding vngroundid was noon almes at þe bigynnyng, & it is not aftir quykenyd to be almes wiþ-oute skile; but almes were to sue crist & ordeyne mennus lif aftir his lawe. crist is god þat chalengiþ propre to ordeyne siche *perpetuytes, for he is lord wiþ-outen ende; who dare take fro hym þis lordchip? do men good for þer lif, & ȝyue þei to crist perpetuyte, for he can & may do þis as hym likiþ in his chirche. & þus errour in siche synnes haþ destried many kynredis & punysshid many soulis in helle, who so wyste þe soþe bi crist. & þus siche charteres of seculer lordis & of popis ben ofte witnessis of þe errours of þer eldris þat weren grounderis of þes synnes. **[p. 33 MS.] Perpetuity belongs to Christ.*

Capitulum 11^m.

Antichrist says that the whole order of the Church would be destroyed. b ut ȝit anticrist grucchiþ & seiþ þat þis is heresye, for it techiþ a weye bi which hooly chirche shulde be destried. for ȝif þer were no pope in erþe ne no cardenals his felowis, þer were no patriarkis, ne archibischops, ne bischops, ne erchedekenes, ne officials, ne persouns, ne prestis. & ȝif þes ordris perisshiden þus, erþely lordis shulden sunnere perische, & so þe chirche shulde dwelle wiþ-outen ordre, as fendis wanten ordre in helle & ben in horroure wiþ-outen ende. Heere it haþ be seyð ofte bi witnesse of trewe men þat þer mut nedis be an ordre of þre partis of þe chirche, þat ben clerkis, lordis & comyns, & in ech of hem is ordre. for crist, þat is boþe god & man & heed & ground of hooly chirche, puttide þis ordre pleyndly & ȝaf lawis to contynue it, & a man may no more shewe þat he is anticrist hym silf þan to reuerse

True men reply there would still be Christ's order of the three parts of Holy Church.

þis ordre, & feyne a newe wiþ-oute ground. & siþ we taken of goddis lawe þat crist dwelliþ wiþ-uten ende, he were a fool out of bileue þat diffiede heere of cristis help. crist wole ordeyne to his chirche prestis & ordre þat is nedeful, al ȝif þes foure sectis weren sunkun down to þer fadir. leue whanne þe pope was deed & cardenals weren not ȝit sprongun, in whois hond was þe chirche þat wandriþ heere vpon erþe? certis in cristis hond, þat dwelliþ euere heed of hooly chirche; & he mut nedis ordeyne prestis, summe hyere & summe lowerre, aftir þat he ȝyueþ hem grace to profite more aftir his lawe. & þus ȝif þer weren no popis, ne cardenals, ne emperours prelati, hooly chirche shulde stonde wel bi þe ordre þat crist puttide. & ȝif þou axe who shulde make þes prestis, & bi what wordis & whois autorite, certis bileue nedib vs to seye þat crist mut make þes prestis, oþer bi wordis hid to vs or bi grace wiþ-oute wordis, as crist not wiþ-uten cause made apostlis & telde vs not bi what wor*dis he made hem; why shulde not crist do ȝit so? trowe we þat crist sitting in heuene is lettid to strecche his grace so fer? siþ he is boþe god & man, & gouernyþ vs in oþere þingis. & ȝif þou seye þat on þis maner myȝte ech man feyne hym silf a staat, & seye þat he is hierste man þat dwelliþ in erþe vndir crist; soþ it is þat many pseudois may speke myche wiþ-oute ground, & þerfore crist haþ ȝouyn a lawe to trowe hem not but ȝif þey grounden hem. & siþ crist bad trowe to his werkis & ȝaf neþer bullis ne lettris selid, men shulden more trowe hooly werkis þan popis bullis or bishops lettris. for alle þese ben not gospel, but þe fende may regne vndir þes writtis; for boþe popis, bishopsis & prestis may be wiþ þes þe fendis children, & no partis of hooly chirche but fendis ordeyned to be dampnyd. trowe þou to vertuouus dedis of prestis, & algatis to þer mekenesse, þat þey coueyten noon hye staat þat is not groundid in goddis lawe. & so proude prestis & coueytous ben suspect of prestis staat. but þis suspicioun is not bileue ne hope þat man shulde haue. but neþeles ech man heere shulde lyue in hope þat bi his lif

Christ is always head of the Church, and he will provide priests.

*[p. 33b MS.]

It may be objected that each man might claim what portion he chose.

Christ has taught us only to believe such as rest in his laws.

We should judge priests by their good deeds.

It would be no harm if all pontificals were burnt.

These new orders distemper the order of Christ.

Popes and cardinals have no *[p. 34 MS.] authority from Christ.

Priesthood consists in meekness and charity.

he shulde come to heuene, for mekenesse & oþere vertues þat he haþ. & þus we shulden lyue in bileue in hope & in charite, & who so wantiþ hope heere he is an opyn anticrist. þus we hopen to be sauýd, al ȝif þes prelatis ben opyn fendis, & oure bileue & hope is picchid in þe grace of iesu crist, & oure gode werkis may we knowe wiþ entent in oure soule. many men trowen more to gode werkis þan to staat of pope or bischop, & so alle þes pontificals ben byneþe hooly writ, so þat ȝif þey alle weren brent cristendom shulde stonde wel. for ellis ȝif freris founden wordis to sacre þe armes of a prest, & þe pope ȝaue hym meede to fiȝte wiþ oþere cristenmen, he were out of bileue þat trowede not to al þis. but fer be it fro cristenmen to trowe sicke cautels of þe fend; & bi þis may men se answeere to þe foorme of anticristis resoun. þes wordis of þe emperours prelatis þat ben not groundid in goddis lawe destrien not hooly chirche, ne þe ordre þat crist haþ sett; but founding of þes newe ordris distemperiþ þe ordris of crist, & þus þe fend steliþ in mo men to his stede. þe ordre of kyngis & dukis & knyȝtis & of seruauentis to hem ben groundid *in goddis lawe, but not of popis & cardenals. crist ordeynede bi his ordre þat his apostlis & his prestis shulden be felowis & meke men & telle not hye bi hem silf, & so crist makिþ distinccioun bi-twixe ordre of erþly lordis & ordre of his prestis. for þat ordre is hid to god & stondiþ in mekenesse & oþere dedis of charite; & so blyndenesse of anticrist shulde not disproue þes worldly lordis, ne proue þat bi þe same skyle mut be þis ordre of emperours prelatis.

Capitulum 12^m.

Antichrist asks ȝ who is to give indulgences, if there were no pope.

it anticrist argueþ þat it is nedeful to þe chirche þat þe pope & his cardenals & oþere prelatis reule it. for who shulde ellis assoyle men & graunte hem so large indulgencis boþe of peyne & of synne, haue þei neuere so longe synned. & oþere priuylegies of þe pope may not be teld of

erþly men. in þis mater han cristenmen seyð priuely as þey dursten, þat it were good men to be war lest anticrist disseyue hem. & god wite it, men wolden wiþ wille seye treuþe for worchip of crist & for profit of his chirche & hope to gete blis in heuene. boþe cristenmen & anticrist grounden hem on iesu crist, but þey fallen in-to dyuerse weyes bi þe tempting of þe fend. anticrist leueþ mekenesse & paciense wiþ oþere vertues, but cristenmen holden þes vertues, summe more & summe lesse. & holde we þus cristis lawe wiþ-uten nouelries of anticrist, & seye we hou cristenmen shulden do in þys fendis blast. & þus men seyen bi cristis lore þat anticrist failiþ first whanne he seiþ þat it is nedeful þat þe pope & cardenals reule cristis chirche. for whanne cristis chirche þrof, weren no sicke pope & cardenals; & siþen þes prelatis weren comun yn regnede anticrist wiþ synne. & anentis asoyling, bileue techiþ cristenmen þat iesu crist mut nedis asoyle ȝif ony man shule be assoylid, & anticrist may not for shame denye opynly þis bileue; but he seiþ þat crist mut nedis assente wiþ hym in asoyling, & he groundiþ þis bi þe gospel, but it is shame to reherse it. soþ it is crist grauntide to petre þat what þing he asoylide on erþe shulde be asoylid in heuene, & so it is of bynding; but þis was lymytid to petre & hise þat suyden þe *steppis þat petre wente, & whanne þer soyling & þer bynding acordide wiþ god in heuene. but nou it is no bileue þat þes gon petris steppis, & suen crist þe streiȝt weye þat shulde lede herdis to heuene. & also it is no bileue þat what tyme þat þes prelatis feynen hem to asoyle, þey acorden wiþ crist aboue; & so it is no bileue þat þei acorden euere wiþ crist. For as þey synnen in oþer þing, so þey synnen in þis poynt; for he þat discordiþ fro goddis wille in his lif & in his dede may liȝtly discorde fro god in profecye of sicke asoyling. men preyen gode cristenmen bi þe vertu of iesu crist þat þey dampne not þes wordis to liȝtly wiþ-uten skyle, but reste in resoun & goddis lawe & holde al þat þese techen. for þis shulden alle cristenmen do & passe not þe boundis of þis; & þis shulden men telle opynly

Christian men have said privily that we should beware of Antichrist's deceits.

Antichrist fails: since the Church throve when there were no popes or cardinals.

As to absolution: Christ absolves all who should be absolved.

Christ gave power of loosing and binding to Peter;

*[p. 34b MS.]

but these men do not follow in Peter's steps.

Men who depart from God's will in their life, may do so in their absolution.

The Pope may
give absurd
indulgences,

that would keep
a soul quite out
of purgatory.

It is dangerous
to believe these
things as of faith.

It is not a matter
of faith that this
or that man is
pope.

Such grants are
'privileges'; ask
the authority for
them before buy-
ing

to sufferē deþ for loue of treuþe. & bi þis may men se what
þei shulen trowe of indulgensis. it is no poynt of bileue
þat þe pope euere more in graunting of þes indulgensis acordiþ
wiþ goddis wille; as it is no bileue þat so longe shal þis
world stonde, as þe pope grauntiþ indulgensis. but bileue
techiþ cristenmen þat indulgensis shulen no lengere laste; &
þus it is no bileue ȝif þe pope, for bidding of a kyng, grauntiþ
so large indulgensis þat a man may in a masse tyme where
euere he heriþ þis masse gete twenti þousynd ȝeer of pardoun,
& þat wole passe alle þe tyme þat soulis shulen dwelle in
purgatorye; & þus he shal not dwelle in peyne bi þe graunt
of þis pope. manye sicke þingis ben writun þat ben nouȝt of
bileue, & þerfore it is perelous to trowe hem as bileue. We
bileuen on cristis lawe þat ȝif man synnede neuere so longe,
& were neuere asoylid of pope ne of his prest vndir hym, ȝif
he wolde forsake his synne & be contrit for formere synne &
ende þis lif on þis maner, god wolde forȝyue hym his synne.
We kunnen not telle hou longe þat god wolde punysshe hym
in purgatorye, & þis is more grace of god þan þe pope telliþ
in his lawe, for he wole nedis constreyne men to be asoylid
of hym or hise, but þis durste noon apostle do. & þus it is
no bileue, as it is no bileue þat þis or þis is very pope. for
mannus choys makiþ no prest, hou euere þis lawe be hyed.
for enleuene apostlis to-gidere dursten not chese mathy
apostle, & ȝit þe hooly goost was wiþ hem & coueytise was
away. & þus seyen summe trewe men þat sicke grauntis of
þe pope þat ben not groundid in goddis lawe ben prauylegies,
& litil worþ, & siþ þey ben not bileue, axe ground of hem
bifore þou bie hem.

Explicit tractatus de papa.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the Tract *De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, Cap. V. from MS. Ashburnham, lf. 87*b* et seq.

Restat videre naturaliter de dominio ac servitute que in clericis magis fetet. Secte autem he quatuor ex cautela diaboli majorem servitutem in seculares dominos introducunt, et specialiter in hoc quod ipsos vecordant ad dei ordinanciam defendendum. Ut incipiendo a papa, ipse lege Christi exigit quod in regaliis exteris citet et precipiat quod quecunque persone sub regum dominio, quamcunque deus eos incarcerat, compareant in tempore brevi quod limitat suis iudicibus responsuri. 1. Sic autem contingit romanum presbiterum Pope cites persons before his judges insanire quod mittat in Angliam clericis quos contempnit ut respondeant infra tempus modicum suis cardinalibus iudicibus inimicis, et ut machinetur hanc stultam cautelam diaboli quod Romam veniant vel ubicunque papam esse contingit, sub pena crudelissima responsuri. Sic enim contingeret papam regnicolas quoscunque regum destruere et depauperare regna tam pecunia quam personis.

2. Iterum cum non tantum rutilat sua sapiencia ut destruat in regnis latrunculos, videtur quod necessitare vendicat fideles He does not make the ways safe for them. ut per vias abruptissimas et periculosissimas tam corpori quam anime capiant iter suum. Christus autem non vendicat huiusmodi potestatem.

3. Iterum contingit quod deus necessitat citatos illos ex infirmitatis vel debilitatis impotencia quod infra tempus datum et usque ad diem iudicii non poterunt per tantam distanciam laborare. Cum ergo Christus ipsis precipit quod non sic laborent ad illam distanciam et papa crudeliter mandat oppositum, patet quod in hoc ipse induit habitum antichristi, cum nemo posset esse Christo magis contrarius quam tam God may disable men from appearing to the citation.

dominative mandando oppositum illius quod Christus tam realiter precipit in effectum.

The Pope may be
in hell by the
time fixed.

4. Iterum quod patet irrationabilitas hujus mandati evidet via multiplici; nam papa de valde possibili potest interim in inferno condemnari. Que igitur prudencia citare hominem dum nesciat quorsum sicut nescit de prefixo termino ubi erit, specialiter si sit vivus vel mortuus, vel a dignitate sua depositus et in carcere violente reclusus. Nec habet ista citacio fundacionem aliam nisi quod Christus accipiendo baptismum aquaticum venit humiliter ad baptistam, ut patet Jo. primo et Mat. 3^o; ideo antichristo pertinet procedere per viam contrariam.¹

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Men may answer
quite as well
by letter.

6. Iterum citaciones tales notata causa possunt faciliter in Anglia terminari, cum citati volunt humiliter detegere et mittendo scribere ad romanam curiam fidem suam.² Que ergo ratio citandi tales incarceratos domini pro hac causa. Certum quidem est ex fide quod apostolus non habuit potestatem a deo nisi ad edificacionem non destruccionem ecclesie vel persone. Et si diabolus hanc potestatem simulaverit, in ista ficta simulacione est faciliter convincibilis esse mendax. Ideo cum unus fidelis debet in illo casu quod precipitur obedire domino Jesu Christo, sanum consilium atque catholicum videtur hominem tenere se domi et humiliter petere suffragium domini Jesu Christi. In ipso enim clamamus abba, pater, qui est mirabilis episcopus animarum. Et martirizacio ista diaboli est longe crudelior atque callidior quam martirizacio facta per seculares in ecclesia primitiva. Immo libera nos domine ab isto periculoso tempore et venenosis sagittis emissis de pharetra antichristi. Eya, milites Christi, servate viriliter libertatem vobis datam a domino non solum quoad bona fortune vel corpora sed quoad animam et virtutes. Antichristus enim licet stolidus vendicat dominari omnibus istis tribus.

A Christian
should ask help
from the king,

7. Iterum vindicare debet catholicus ex titulo misericordie subsidium a sano concilio regis sui, nam tanquam certum supponitur quod papa non habet potestatem tantam super corpus hominis regis legii ut rex habet; quis ergo Achitophel proiberet quod rex mandet tali suo legio ne ad pape mandatum tali discrimini se convertat. Si autem papa plus et principalius dominatur super homine regis legio quam rex

¹ I leave out No. 5 as it has to do with the Pope's exacting oaths of obedience from prelates and others.

² Compare the beginning of the so-called letter to Pope Urban, "Gaudeo plane detegere cuicumque fidem meam quam teneo, et specialiter Romano pontifici."—F. Z. 341.

ipse, cum potest esse inimicus regis et regni, ut nuper contigit in effectum,¹ videtur quod papa habet potestatem in cunctos regis regnicolas in regem et regnum proprium rebellare; ideo certum videtur quod rex habet plus principalem potestatem super corpore hominis sui legii quam iste episcopus ratione ecclesie. Aliter enim Constantinus concessisset Silvestro ad destruccionem sui imperii principalitatem dominii super singulos suos legios; sed certum est quod nec istud potuit nec papa debuit acceptare tale dominium. Sicut ergo rex potest et debet servare in suo regno aurum vel jocale, licet pro ipso papa mandaverit, sic et hominem suum legium, cum in casu sit regno tam necessarius ut hoc aurum; specialiter dum papa non habet aliquid contra hunc clericum nisi quod legem dei et jus regni pupplicat contra refugam antichristi. Nec graviter ferat catholicus quod fidelis sic postulat humanum subsidium propter illud Jer. 17°: *Maledictus qui confidit in homine et ponit carnem brachium suum*, quia debemus in deo confidere principaliter, credendo indefectibilitatem sue misericordie tanquam fidem; sed in homine suppositive et ministrally possumus confidere citra fidem, cum confidendo principaliter in deo quod moveat suum organum ad in tali justicia pertinente magnatibus adjuvandum, possumus ad hoc per fideles evidencias homines inclinare. Et unum credimus; quod quicumque Achitophel consuluerit regem ad oppositum est proditor, a fide et utilitate exorbitans regis sui. Necesse tamen habemus percepta multitudine scolarum antichristi in dei adjutorium figere fidem nostram.

and would not so
show distrust
of God.

The tract, "De Citacionibus frivolis et aliis Versuciis Antichristi" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 65), begins by setting out the question at issue.

Questio. Si papa vel ejus vicario citante virum legium regis ut compareat coram eo personaliter pro loco et tempore que ipse voluerit limitare, dum rex non licenciaverit, predictus vir legius teneatur sub pena gravis peccati coram papa vel ejus vicario in dictis loco et tempore comparere? Et videtur quod sic, quia aliter ipsum excommunicant, spoliant, incarcerant, vel occidunt, quod non facerent nisi gravis culpa hoc exigat, cum deus non potest punire hominem nisi culpa pene hujusmodi precedente. Ergo conclusio vera.

Is a man bound
to appear to
a citation?

Sed antequam arguitur ad partem contrariam argucia ista sophistica est solvenda. Constat quidem logicis quod ratio ista To say so is to

¹ This shows that the tract was written after the Great Schism.

imply that the
Pope cannot err.

God may call the
man in another
direction.

non habet colorem nisi supposito hoc infideli porrismate, quod nec papa nec ejus vicarius errare poterit in hac parte. Posset enim esse quod talis sit antichristus et manifestus diabolus extollens se inevidenter (?) supra omne quod dicitur deus; et tunc idem foret sic ipsi annuere et antichristo sive diabolo consentire. Posset enim talis prelatus agitari tanta insania quod, deo citante virum legium ad contrarium, ipse citet irrationabilissime contra deum. Cum enim citare sit mandare ad futuram obedienciam adimplendum, patet quod stat deum citare realiter virum hunc legium per penam corporis quam infligit ne sic exeat regnum regis. Et cum talis prelatus patenter citat ad contrarium, patet lucide ipsum esse facientem hoc scientifice contra Christum, et per consequens antichristum. Et cum Christus sit major dominus, quia verus deus et dominus dominorum, patet patule quam necesse sit hunc virum legium non tali citacioni talis diaboli consentire. Dicit enim apostolus prima Cor. 10°. *Fidelis est deus qui non permittet vos temptari supra id quod potestis; sed facit cum temptatione etiam proventum ut possitis sustinere.* Et sic videtur quod imminente tali temptatione diaboli fidelis vir legius debet in deo confidere et Christo non illi diabolo in isto facinore obedire; quia sepe deus procul videt quomodo talis prelatus presumens hanc Antichristi vesaniam erit, antequam tempus quod limitat venerit, adeo impeditus, quod non tunc erit oportunitas ad virum illum examinandum, cum dei citacio citacionem talem diabolicam sepe frustrat.

.

A man sins who
obeys the Pope
rather than
Christ.

Ex istis colligitur quod quicumque fidelis in domino sic citatus consenserit sic vecorditer antichristo, dimittendo laborem injunctum sibi a domino, peccat graviter tanquam stolidus preeligens sibi ambiguum, pro quo tam corpore quam anima est dampnandus. Cum ergo tales prelati non possunt occidere animam persone quam sic citaverint in inferno, et evidens sit quod ex tali stulta obediencia tam corpus quam anima occiduntur, stultum videtur, et vecors eleccio pro citacione tali frivola laborare. Si enim sintilla caritatis vigeret in isto prelato visitaret talem provinciam instar Christi, vel saltem instrueret ipsam epistolariter more Pauli. Sed sicut citat ad locum quem nescit et pro causa quam habitualiter exprimere erubescit, sic nescit fidem catholicam etiam de hostia consecrata¹ quam tractat cotidie, et erubescit pandere causam diabolicam pro qua citat.

.

The Pope does
not know the
true faith as to
the Host.

¹ This shows that the tract was written after Wyclif had attacked the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

Unde quia diabolus et quodlibet ejus membrum redarguunt seipsos in peccatis que perpetrant, notant quidam leges quas papa approbat in hac parte. Nam in decretis, 18^a distincione, sic scribitur: "Si episcopus metropolitanus ad provinciales episcopos epistolas direxerit in quibus eos aut ad ordinationem summi pontificis aut ad synodum invitet, postpositis omnibus excepta grava necessitate vel infirmitate corporis ac precepcione regia, ad constitutum diem adesse non differant." Ecce triplex excusacio excusat a citacione metropolitani, ut videtur si fuerit ex mandato summi pontificis, cum ipse sit quidam episcopus et per dei gratiam metropolitanus. Primum est gravis necessitas que videtur maxima in custodia Christi ovium, ne a lupis rapacibus lani-entur. Secundum est infirmitas corporis propter quam deficit citato dispositio data a deo ad taliter laborandum. Et 3^m est preceptio regia quando rex precepit, sicut debet, suo legio ne taliter extra suam provinciam superflue evagetur. Et omnes iste tres cause vel aliquis earum in qualibet citacione hujusmodi sunt reperte, et specialiter cum rex regum prohibeat taliter evagari. Ad eleccionem itaque summi pontificis qui est Christus indubie debent viatores singuli laborare, cum Christum debent viantes singuli, postpositis mandatis et citacionibus humanis, eligere, juxta illud deuteronomii *dominum elegisti hodie*. Et sic viantes eligunt deum et ipse ab eis eligitur quandocunque mandatum sive concilium suum efficitur et mandatum humanum postponitur, quod videtur debere fieri quandocunque citacio talis frivola contempnitur et voluntas domini adimpletur. Et sic dicit quidam debilis et claudus citatus ad hanc curiam quod prohibicio regia impedit ipsum ire quia rex regum necessitat et vult efficaciter quod non vadat. Dicit eciam quod domi oportet ipsum eligere summum pontificem Jesum Christum, quod est gravis necessitas, eo quod cum ejus omissione vel negligencia non potest romanus pontifex vel aliquis angelus dispensare.

Three good excuses from a citation—

1. Duty to Christ's flock;

2. Bodily infirmity;

3. The King's command.

Answer of one who has been cited and who is lame and feeble.

In these last sentences it seems to me impossible to doubt that Wyclif is speaking of himself.

NOTES.

Page 2, line 1.—The comparison of the religious orders to the Pharisees was common with Wyclif. Thus in his tract on Matthew xxiii. he says: “Nec dubium quin fratres et alii religiosi novelli, divisi a vita communi secte Christiane tam in cerimoniais quam in loco, sunt pharisei.”—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 76.

The comparison had been made long before Wyclif's time, and is to be found in a sermon of William of St. Amour.—(Brown's Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum, ii. 43.)

P. 2, l. 11.—*Of þe þridde spekeþ þe maister of stories.*

The reference is to the *Historia Scolastica* of Petrus Comestor. The book, which is an abridgment of the Bible history, was very popular in the Middle Ages. The account of the Essenes occurs in chap. xxxi. of the *Historia Evangelica*, p. 211 of the edition of Paris, 1513.

P. 2, l. 16.—*Jesu cursede hem ofte ȝee eiȝte tymes.*

In Matthew xxiii. “Woe unto you” is repeated eight times. Hence the title *Væ Octuplex* to an English exposition of that chapter printed in S. E. W. ii. 379. There is a Latin tract bearing the same title.—(Shirley, 43.)

P. 3, l. 16.—*Seiynge . . þat crist tauȝte not . . þe beste ordre.*

Ac si dedignarentur vel erubescerent sequi Christum patronam, sed unum alium mendacem et grandem peccatorem sibi statuunt, regulam Christi ordinis deserendo.—*Dialogus*, iv. 35, p. 371.

P. 4, l. 19.—*Lettris of fraternite.*

The convents were accustomed to grant to their benefactors letters entitling those named in them to a share in the benefits of all prayers

and merits of the convent or order. These letters are a frequent subject for satire. Thus Jacke Upland :

Why aske ye no letters of bretherheads
of other mens praiers,
as ye desire that other men
should aske letters of you ?—Wright, *Pol. Poems*, vol. ii. p. 21.

P. 5, l. 9.—*þe pursuyt is maad for prestes techyng men where þei schullen do here almes, &c.*

That is, the preachers had exhorted the people not to give alms to friars and monks, but to the sick and bedridden poor. This was a common subject with Wyclif and his followers, and was naturally not approved by the religious orders. Compare the next article.

P. 5, l. 25.—*Maken profession to most hey pouert.*

There seems here to be a reference to the rule of St. Francis, where we read: “*þis is þe heynesse of þe moste hey pouert*” (p. 42). The friars professed a more rigid poverty than the monks, since the latter were bound only to personal poverty, whereas the friars were forbidden to possess anything either individually or collectively. This (theoretical) perfection of poverty was one of the great boasts of the order. “*Una [paupertas] est omnium Christianorum quæ excludit alienum et includit commune et proprium. Alia est monachorum et multorum religiosorum quæ excludit alienum et proprium sed includit et admittit commune, quia habent aliquid in communi licet nihil habeant in particulari. Tertia est fratrum Minorum, quæ excludit alienum, speciale et commune et includit solum simplicem usum facti.*”—Nicolaus Oranus (Oresme), *Tractatus in regulam Sancti Francisci* (Luxemburg, 1626).

P. 5, l. 27.—*Gaiest wast housis, &c.*

For the splendour of the friars' convents, see the description in *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*, line 118, and still more line 156 et seq. In the latter passage, the author may well have had in view the very convent where the Council was held which condemned Wyclif's doctrines in 1382. The church of the Austin Friars in Broad Street is still used by the Dutch, and although much damaged some years ago by fire, and by the consequent restoration, it presents a fair specimen of a church built with a special view to preaching.

P. 6, l. 27.—*And slen wommen þat withstonden hem in þis synne.* The same charge is brought against the friars farther on (p. 12). Compare Chaucer :

“For ther as wont was to walken an elf,
Ther walketh noon but the lymytour himself.

.

Wommen may now go saufly up and down ;
In every bussch or under every tre
There is none other incubus but he,
And he ne wol doon hem no dishonour.”

Wife of Bath's Tale, 17-25.

P. 6, last line.—*Lumpis of zonge men.*

So in Dialogus, cap. 28—"tales globos claustralium."—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 114.

P. 7, l. 5 from bottom.—*But zif he make a vow to a blynd pylgrymage.*

The 'greater satraps' had sufficient reason for reserving to themselves the right of dispensing with pilgrimage. The value of the right may be judged from Walsingham's account of the Cardinal of St. Praxedes, who came to England armed with powers usually reserved to the Pope: "Vota peregrinationis ad Apostolorum limina, ad Terram Sanctam, ad Sanctum Jacobum, non prius remisit quam tantam pecuniam recepisset quantam, juxta veram æstimationem, in eisdem peregrinationibus expendere debuissent."—Walsingham, ed. Riley, vol. i. p. 452.

P. 7, l. 3 from bottom.—*Satrap.*

A favourite name of Wyclif's for worldly prelates. So in the Dialogus: "Que ergo evidencia movet hos satrapas sic voluntati domini adversari?"—Cap. xiii. (MS. Ashburnham, 103b.)

P. 8, l. 7.—*Graunte hem þe blesse of hevene.*

The Pope was liberal of indulgences on behalf of Spencer's crusade in Flanders to a degree which seems to have shocked even the orthodox. Knighton tells us: "Habuit prædictus episcopus indulgentias mirabiles cum absolutione a pœna et a culpa pro dicta cruciata a papa Urbano VI. ei concessas. Cujus auctoritate tam mortuos quam vivos, ex quorum parte contributio sufficiens fiebat, per se et suos commissarios a pœna et culpa absolvebat. Dicebatur enim quod quidam de commissariis suis asserebant quod ad eorum præceptum angeli de cœlo descenderent et animas in purgatoriis locis positas de pœnis eriperent et ad cœlos absque mora deducerent."—Twysden's Decem Scriptores, 2671. No wonder that Wyclif spoke strongly. In his Exposition of Matthew xxiv. he says: "Qui eciam unquam audivit majus prodigium quam quod talis refuga per catulos suos suscitet hujusmodi cruciatam, quod quilibet laborans in suo subdolo negocio suum proximum occidendo erit a pena et culpa certitudinaliter absolutus. Et sic statim advolabit ad celum sine pena purgatorie, cum beatis ceteris collocatus."—Ashburnham, lf. 60. He goes on to lay the blame partly on the friars, without whom he says the Pope could not have accomplished such wickedness.

P. 8, last line.—*Experymētis, or wiche craft.*

This looks like a reference to Roger Bacon, but he was not the only student of physics among the friars; see Prof. Brewer's pref. to Monumenta Franciscana: "I repeat that the first sustained attempts at experimental philosophy commenced with the friars, and grew out of the actual necessities of their position."—p. xliii.

P. 9, l. 1.—*Veyn songis, &c.*

Compare with this the social accomplishments enumerated in Piers Plowman, B. xiii. 230:

"Ac for I can noither tabre ne trompe · ne telle none gestes,
Farten ne fythelen · at festes, ne harpen,
Iape ne iogly · ne gentlych pype,

Ne noyther sailly ne saute · ne synge with þe gyterne,
I haue none gode gyftes · of þise grete lordes."

P. 9, l. 14.—*Confessioun and beriynge*.

The inroad of strange confessors, among whom the friars were the chief, was a great trial to a good parish priest. The sinner found it easier and pleasanter to confess to a passing stranger than to one who knew all about him. There were other less worthy motives that kept up a jealousy on this point. Thus Jacke Upland :

"Why covet ye shrift and burying
of other men's parishens,
And none other sacrament
That falleth to Christian folke?
Why busie ye not to heare
to shrift of poore folke,
as well as of rich."

Wright, Pol. Poems and Songs, vol. ii. p. 22.

To which Daw Topias retorts :

"I trowe it be the paroche priest,
Jacke, that thou meenest
that nyl not hosel his parischens
til the peny be paied,
ne assoilen hem of her synne
withouten schrift silver."—*Id.* p. 46.

Cf. note to p. 224. Burials of rich men were profitable, as, beside burial fees, there were always bequests for masses at the tomb.

P. 10, l. 18.—*þei feynen hem sotil of fisik*.

The study of medicine was a tradition among the friars. It had begun with their devoted ministrations to the lepers and the sick poor. "The practice of medicine is engrossed by the friars in the thirteenth century," says Prof. Brewer (*Monumenta Franciscana*, p. xlv). With this passage compare point xxxviii. in the tract "How Religious Men," etc. (p. 224).

P. 10, l. 6 from bottom.—*þan þes pharisees presen faste to here wyues*.

"For when the gode man is fro hame,
And the frere comes to our dame,
He spares nauther for synne ne shame
That he ne dos his wille."

Political Poems (T. Wright), i. 264.

P. 11, l. 9.—*Priuatis ordris*.

The plural form of the adjective here should be noticed. Cf. Mr. Skeat's note to *Piers Plowman*, x. 343, p. 199.

P. 11, l. 20.—*As hildegar seiþ*.

St. Hildegard (b. 1098, d. 1179) was Abbess of St. Rupert, near Bingen. She was an ascetic and visionary, whose prophecies were frequently cited by the Lollards for their denunciation of abuses in the Church. She is mentioned in *Triologus*, iv. 26 (p. 338). Cf. *Pecock's Repressor*, 483.

P. 12, l. 4.—*Pore freris serabit.*

Sarabaitæ originally meant men who professed to be monks, but subjected themselves to no rule. “Tertium vero monachorum teterimum genus est sarabaitarum qui, nulla regula approbati . . . adhuc operibus servantes sæculo fidem, mentiri Deo per tonsuram noscuntur.”—Rule of St. Benedict, cap. i. The term was afterwards applied to the Waldensian teachers, and in the text it seems to refer to the spiritual Franciscans or Fraticelli.

P. 12, l. 18.—*Perpetual almes of coffris.*

I suppose this means endowment (perpetual alms) by annuity payable in money, as distinguished from gifts of “unmeble” property. Such money would probably have a chest or “coffer” assigned to it, especially if the donor had limited it to some particular purpose. See Mr. Anstey’s introduction to *Munimenta Academica*, p. xxxvii, etc.

P. 12, l. 2 from bottom.—*ʒif þei ben made wafreris.*

Wafer was the name commonly given to the bread for the Eucharist, but it meant also a sort of sweet cake, as does the Fr. *gaufre*, and the waferer was a hawker of these cakes. The waferers had a bad reputation, if we may believe Chaucer’s Pardoner :

“yonge fruytsteris
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Which that ben verray develes officeres,” etc.

Pard. Tale, 16.

Compare *Piers Plowman*, (B.) v. 641.

The text, however, does not imply that the religious actually turned cake-hawkers. It only says that they were as bad when they made presents of eatables in the hope of getting them returned with large profit. The sarcasm would have the more point if the monasteries were often noted for well-prepared delicacies, and it is possible that the pastry-cook’s art may have been cultivated in the cloister then, as the liqueur-maker’s is now at La Trappe and the Chartreuse.

P. 13, l. 10.—*ʒif þei geten hem worldly offis.*

“Item, quod monstruosius est, religiosi et monachi, qui plus sunt officiales fisci quam Christi, in curiis principum et cathedris judiciorum et cameris computorum et aliis actibus secularibus militantes contra statuta Canonum.”—Peter d’Ailly, *De Emendatione Ecclesiæ* (Brown’s *Fasc. Rer. Expet.* i. 411).

P. 13, l. 13.—*Anyneris.*

Annona, originally meaning yearly produce, and thence corn or provisions, came to have the sense of a rent in kind, and also of a daily allowance of food. The annonarius, the person charged to deal with the annona, might be collector, dispenser, or both together. If, as I suppose, *anyneris* is the same word, it may be represented by steward.

P. 14, last line.—*Crist preied most in þe nyzt in hillis, &c.*

“Et sic de vita Christi legimus quod ipse elegit facere facta sua sub divo, cum in duplici convivio sub divo populum suum pavit, sub divo

sepius predicavit, et sub divo pernoctando patrem suum pro ecclesia exoravit."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. xxi. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 109).

P. 15, l. 9.—*Cost of kechenes and zate housis.*

So in the Latin Sermons (Part II. Sermon 49), Wyclif, after remarking on the sumptuous living of the monks, complains of the great kitchens which the abbots build. Then he continues: "Et ad figurandum conquestus suos atque dominia super dominos seculares multe abathie constituunt sibi portas sumptuosas cum propugnaculis tanquam castra."—MS. T.C.C. f. 223. The great stone kitchen at Glastonbury was built in the 14th century, but I believe its exact date is disputed. The great gateways at Battle and Bury St. Edmunds are also of the 14th century. The latter "combines in a remarkable manner a richly ornate character with an ingenious system for defence; it is at the same time an ornamental structure and a strong fortress."—Turner's *Domestic Architecture in England*, vol. ii. p. 191.

P. 15, l. 24.—*Placeboes and dirige.*

Placebo was the name commonly given to Vespers in the Office for the Dead, from the first word of the Antiphon (with which the service opens): *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum*.—*Sarum Breviary*, ed. Procter and Wordsworth, ii. 271.

Dirige similarly, as the first word of the Antiphon at Mattins in the same Office, gave its name to the Service.—*Id.* 273.

P. 19, l. 9 from bottom.—The signs of Antichrist and the fifteen tokens before Doomsday seem to have been popular subjects of discourse. The Apocalypse supplied the groundwork for them, but the popular fancy added much. Those who are curious in such matters may find the whole set forth in detail in the *Cursor Mundi*, lines 21971, et seq. (E.E.T.S. No. 66). There is a shorter version in Mr. Furnivall's "Adam Davy," etc. (E.E.T.S. No. 69). It is to be noticed that different versions do not agree exactly as to the order or even the nature of the different signs.

Wyclif speaks of them with contempt in his Latin Sermons: "Quomodocunque autem illi sompniunt de 15^{cim.} signis ante diem iudicii, evangelium tamen dicit Mat. 24^{to}: Sicut autem fuit in diebus Noe ita erit adventus filii hominis. . . . Melius autem est dicto evangelio credere quam ypocrisis codicibus sompniatis de deliramentis fantasticis hebreorum."—*Sermons*, Part II. Sermon 51 (MS. T.C.C. lf. 225a).

P. 21, l. 2 from bottom.—*Withouten synne, & alle degrees, &c.*

I think I ought to have changed "&" into "in" (and of course left out the comma before it).

P. 23, l. 16.—*pes rome renneris.*

Rome-runners seems to have been the regular name given to the persons who gained a livelihood by acting as agents at the Papal Court. There was a vast amount of private business continually in hand there, such as appeals in ecclesiastical causes, and the obtaining of dispensa-

tions. Cf. Sir John Paston's letter: "I have answer ageyn fro Roome that there is the welle of grace and salve sufficiant for suche a soore, and that I may be dyspencyd with: neverthelesse my proctore there axeth a mj docatys, as he demythe. But Master Lacy, another Rome renner heer," etc.—Paston Letters (Gairdner's edition), vol. iii. p. 101.

Wyclif had no doubt had painful experience of these men during his litigation about the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall.

In Piers Plowman (B. iv. 128) one of the conditions of Reason's Utopia is—

" And alle Rome-renneris for robberis of byþonde,
Bere no silver over see."

Mr. Skeat (note, p. 82) understands the word only of the Roman procurators who came to collect money in England.

P. 24, l. 21.—*Here lordischipe & anemtis god, &c.*

I ought to have struck out the "&." The reference is to Wyclif's doctrine of dominion. If the man does not do his duty to his chief lord, God, his holding is forfeited, and he ceases to have any true lordship before God.

P. 27, l. 6.—Charges against poor priests of disturbing the realm were common, and sometimes not without foundation. The narrator of the Fasciculi Zizaniorum says: "Vix aliquis eorum predicaret quin ad pugnam inter se audientes provocarentur et schismata in villis fierent" (p. 272). In consequence, he says, the gentry required the Archbishop to put an end to these heresies, and this brought about the Council of 1382. Probably the troubles were due as much to vehement supporters of old things as to the preachers of new; but there can be no doubt that during the Conservative reaction which followed the rebellion of 1381 the reformers were viewed with a new suspicion.

P. 27, l. 3 from bottom.—*Riȝtful ȝeuynge & of almes, &c.*

Probably the "&" here should be omitted.

P. 32, l. 26.—*ȝif a man be somonyd to-gidre to þe heiȝere iuge, &c.*

"Prelati citant homines longe melius in causa dei legitime occupatos, homines quos rex regum citat ad locum contrarium, immo quos deus impossibilitat. ut sic compareant."—De Sermone in Monte, c. 6 (MS. T.C.C. f. 355a).

P. 33, l. 22.—*Newe religious assessours.*

The assessors in religious prosecutions seem to have been usually taken from the regulars. Probably among them were to be found the largest number of doctors of theology. In the first meeting of the Council of 1382, in which Wyclif's doctrines and his followers were condemned, sixteen doctors of theology consented to the decisions, and they were all friars. In later meetings five seculars appear, but of these, two (Rigge and Brightwell) had been judged at the first meeting and admitted to pardon.—F.Z. 286-291.

P. 35, l. 5.—*Ne for lecherie 3if men wolen paie rente bi 3eere & dwelle stil þer-inne als longe as hym liste.*

So in Latin Sermons: "Licenciam per annum, vel tempus pecunie huic aptatum, ad mechandum libere quantumcunque voluerit."—Sermons, ii. 20 (MS. T.C.C. 201a).

It was a common cause of complaint that the Ordinaries did not attempt to repress incontinence, but made it a source of gain. "Purs is the ercedeknes helle," says Chaucer's Sompnour; and fines seem to have been generally accepted in place of amendment. In the Parliament of 1372 the Commons petitioned that if the Ordinary did not deprive beneficed clerks who kept concubines, the church should be vacant at the end of half a year, and the patron present anew. Moreover, that in case of the Ordinary being patron, the King should present in his stead.—Rot. Parl. iii. 314. In 1382 the citizens of London took the matter into their own hands, imprisoned some women "in prisona quæ vocatur Dolium," then cropped their hair close, and led them in derision through the streets. They are said to have been stirred up by Wyclif and his followers.—Walsingham, ed. Riley, ii. 65.

P. 35, l. 31.—*Whi schulde curatis pronounsens here breþeren a cursed.*

In one of his Latin Sermons Wyclif lays down that a priest must not excommunicate unjustly, even though his prelate bid him do so. He adds: "potest autem sacerdos inferior dicere parochianis quod talis prelatus dicit se excommunicare talem subditum; immo caveat sibi in consciencia sua quod de illo sibi imposito non sit reus, et detegat virtutem excommunicationis ne simplices de ipsa trepidant ubi non est racionabiliter trepidandum."—Sermons, Part ii. 43 (MS. T.C.C. 218d). Perhaps there is a touch of worldly wisdom here. In announcing the fact of the Bishop's excommunication the priest would have formally complied with the letter. The practical results would fall on the excommunicated person.

P. 36, l. 5 from bottom.—*To enprisone þe bodi aftir fourti daies a cursyng.*

It was the duty of the Chancellor to imprison any one who had been for forty days under the major excommunication, and to hold him until he was released from ban.

P. 40, l. 5.—*Pope honorie.*—Honorius III., 1216-1227.

P. 40, l. 14.—*Mynystreis prouyncials.*

The rulers of the Franciscan Order were called ministers (with a reference to Matt. xx. 25). The head of the Order was the *minister generalis*, and under him there was in each country a *minister provincialis*, who had charge of the general interests of the Order. The use of the plural adjective 'provincials' will be noticed here. Compare p. 11, line 9, and note upon it.

P. 40, l. 34.—*Tweie cotis, &c.*

The Latin runs: "duas tunicas sine caputio et cingulum et braccas et caparonem usque ad cingulum."

P. 41, l. 18.—*Breuyaries, þat is smale sauteris or abreggid.*

This explanatory clause is not in the Latin. I need hardly remark that this is not the usual meaning of breviary. Compare the story about St. Francis and the novice who wanted a psalter (told in preface to Mon. Franciscana, p. xxx), where St. Francis objects, "When you have got a psalter, then you'll want a breviary," etc.

P. 41, l. 20.—*Vndren.*

Halliwell gives "undern, nine o'clock A.M." So, too, Mr. Earle, in his "Two of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles," where the word occurs s.a. 538 and 540, and he is supported by Florence of Worcester, who translates in both cases 'hora tertia.'

In Stratmann's Dictionary undern is translated noon, and in our text it is given for the hour of sext, which rightly belongs to mid-day. There is a curious discrepancy in the use of the word in the Wyclifite Versions. In Mark xv. 25, we find "It was the thridde our, that men clepen undrun." But in v. 33, many copies of the same version have, "the sexte our or undurne." And in John iv. 6, we have again, "The our was as the sixte or undurn." Here two copies substitute for undurn "mydday." Forshall and Madden (Gloss. to W.V.) say "the time from nine to twelve in the morning."

P. 44, l. 5.—*þe lord haþ maad abregged word upon þe erþe.*

A quotation from Rom. ix. 28, where the Vulgate has: "quia verbum breuiatum faciet Dominus super terram."

P. 45, l. 15.—*Stable in general feiþ of cristene men.*

The Latin is: "Stabiles in fide Catholica."

P. 45, l. 22.—*The Testament of St. Francis.*

Another English version of this is printed by Prof. Brewer, from a MS. of the 15th century, in the Appendix to Monumenta Franciscana, p. 562.

P. 45, l. 24.—*Whanne I was in ouere myche synne.*

The Latin is: "Cum essem in peccatis, nimium mihi videbatur amarum."

P. 45, l. 4 from bottom.—*Litel pore prestis of þis world þat dwellen in parichis.*

This curious way of describing secular priests in charge of parishes runs thus in the Latin: "Et si haberem tantam sapientiam quantam Salomon habuit, et invenirem pauperculos sacerdotes hujus sæculi in parochiis in quibus morantur, nolo prædicare contra voluntatem ipsorum."

P. 45, last line.—*Fore in hem I take bi discrecion goddis sone.*

"Quia Filium Dei discerno in eis."

P. 46, l. 5.—*I wile abouen all þingis.*

Here the translation is again rather at fault. The Latin runs: "Et hæc sanctissima mysteria volo super omnia honorare et venerari et in locis pretiosis collocare. Et sanctissima nomina ejus (i.e. Christi) et verba scripta, ubicumque invenero in locis illicitis, volo colligere," etc.

P. 46, l. 18.—*O cote or kirtil with-ynne forþe & with-oute forþ.*

"Pieced" or "clouted" has been left out here. The Latin runs: "Eramus contenti tunica una intus et foris repeciata," etc.

P. 47, l. 10.—*þe Cardynal hostiense.*

The Cardinal of Ostia, afterwards Alexander IV. As Pope he was the great supporter of the Mendicants in their quarrel with the University of Paris.—Milman's Latin Christ. book xi. ch. 2.

P. 47, l. 18.—*& rede þei þes wordis.*

The translation here is hardly intelligible from excessive abridgment. The Latin is: "Et semper hoc scriptum habeant secum juxta regulam. Et in omnibus capitulis quæ faciunt, quando legunt Regulam legant et ista verba."

P. 48, l. 13.—*Men seyn þat he is cursed þat lettij þe riȝtful wille of a dede man.*

"Also all tho ben acursed that lette or procure to lette the testament, and the last wil of folk whan they deye, of thinges that ben ther owne, and that they may skilfully bequethe bothe by lawe of holy chirche and by custome."—*Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, by Rev. Wm. Maskell, vol. ii. p. 294. Compare the tract on the Great Sentence of Curse, S.E.W. iii. 304.

P. 48, l. 8 from bottom.—*In þe time þat sathanas was vnbounden, as the apcalips tellij.*

A literal understanding of Rev. xx. 7 led Wyclif and other mediæval writers to believe that from A.D. 1000 the Church had rapidly grown worse. (Compare p. 3.) Thus, in the *Dialogus* (lib. iv. c. 2) we find: "A tempore autem solutionis Sathanæ, dimissa fide scripturæ, multæ hæreses in ista materia, et specialiter inter fratres et discolos eis similes volitarunt," p. 249. Woodford ingeniously turns this belief against Wyclif: "Sed miror valde unde adquisivit in hoc johannes wicliff tale privilegium, quod omnes doctores de secundo millenario seducti sunt per Sathanam, illo solo excepto."—*Tractatus de peregrinationibus ad loca sancta* (MS. Brit. Mus. Harleian 635).

P. 49, l. 26.—*A scarioth.*

The Scarioth (Iscariot) was the man who bore the bag in which the offerings were put (cf. John xii. 5). He is described in the *Sompnours Tale*, l. 46:

"A stourdy harlot ay went hem byhynde,
That was her hostis man, and bar a sak,
And what men ȝaf hem layd it on his bak."

P. 49, l. 28.—*þei wolen telle gold and money, &c.*

This absurd evasion of the Franciscan rule was commonly practised, and is gravely defended at considerable length by Bishop Pecock in his *Repressor*, Part v. chap. 14.

P. 50, l. 11.—*þe euyl children putten in-to here fadir þe pope, &c.*

"Que ergo caritas filiorum in patrem et patronum, effundere in tantum patrem venenum tam imperfectum quod inficeret filios si servarent?"—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 52).

P. 56, l. 24.—*þes prelatis mysusen þis betere seed.*

"Alii autem praelate Caesarii sunt nimis steriles et non spiritualiter prolifici. . . . Vitium autem Sodomieum corporale est parvum in comparatione ad hoc peccatum."—*Trial.* lib. iii. c. 23, p. 209.

P. 57, l. 20.—The reference at the side should be to Luke ix. 49, instead of the corresponding text in Matthew. *Fonnyd* is evidently the translation of the Vulgate *insulsum*. In W. V. (both) it is translated “unsavory.”

P. 60, l. 2 from bottom.—*Fittrid squyeris*.

The only other instance of this word is in Myrc's Instructions for Parish Priests (E. E. T. S.), p. 35, l. 1146:

“Hast þou ben proude
Of fytered cloþes as folis done.”

It probably means either slashed or cut into tags and streamers. So in p. 121, we have “proude slitterede squyerys,” and again, p. 148, “tatríd squeyeres and opere meyne.” It cannot be supposed that raggid or tatríd means that the squires were shabbily dressed, as the ground of complaint is the magnificence of the prelate's revenue.

Halliwell gives as a Yorkshire phrase, “All in fitters, *i.e.* in very small pieces or fragments.”

P. 60, l. 2 from bottom.—*Swerynge herte & bonys & nailis & opere membris of crist*.

The wickedness of profane swearing was a great point with Wyclif and his followers, some of whom went so far as to declare all oaths unlawful. In one of Wyclif's Early Sermons, he says: “diabolus precepit . . . quod jures per vulnera et membra Christi, ut fias in reputatione hominum major ex verbis audacibus; et ad tantum in isto invaluit doctrina diaboli, quod major pars hominum putat non esse peccatum sic jurare.”—Sermon 14 (MS. Lambeth).

P. 61, l. 10.—*þere þei myȝtten vnneþe before haue bene-bred, &c.*

Compare the “Complaint of the Ploughman”:

“And commonly such been comen
Of poore people
Her fathers suffreth drought & weate,
Many hungrie meales, thirst and cold.
And all this these monkes han forsake,
For Christes love and Saint Benete;
To pride and ease have take;
This religion is evill beseate.
Had they been out of religion,
They must have hanged at the plowe,
Threshing and diking fro toun to toun,
With sorrie meat, and not halfe ynowe.

Wright's *Political Poems*, i. 335.

Bean-bread was made for horses, and was usually called horse-bread. Making it was a special business, frequently if not always separate from that of the regular baker. See *Munimenta Acad.* (Anstey), p. 577. Cf. *English Gilds*, 366.

P. 61, last line.—*Mylneston of assis*.

“Mola asinaria,” Vulgate. Our translation loses this descriptive touch, which was not superfluous in a country where hand-mills were common.

P. 62, l. 18.—*Cotidian distribucion.*

“Distribucio quæ Canonicis fit quotidie.” Dufresne, who cites from an ordinance for the Church of St. John at Ghent: “Vice-curati de distributionibus, corpore prebendæ, aliisque prerogativis prænaratis non gaudebunt, sed illorum portio absentię cedit Quotidianæ, *i.e.* cum absentes fuerint nihil recipient eorum quæ præsentibus recepissent, sed id ad Quotidianam redibit; seu ad eam quæ quotidie fit Canonicis distributionem.” The charge in the text is then that the clergy came to prayers only to get their share of the allowances.

P. 65, l. 13.—*Lordes and ladies ben tratours.*

“Secundo autem erigunt seculares domini suam potestatem contra Christum in hoc quod curatos presbiteros contra suum sensum detinent in suo ministerio.”—*De Officio Pastoralis*, ed. Lechler, p. 38.

P. 66, l. 22.—*Alle þes passen þre fifteenþes.*

A fifteenth, or, to speak more fully, a fifteenth and a tenth, was the usual standard by which subsidies were granted in Parliament. It was a tax on all movable property, of one-tenth in towns, and one-fifteenth in the country. Professor Stubbs estimates the yield of a fifteenth and tenth at about £60,000, including the tenth which was usually granted by Convocation at the same time as Parliament voted the fifteenth. The clerical tenth was reckoned at a third of the whole subsidy.—Stubbs’ *Constitutional History of England*, ii. 549.

P. 66, l. 22.—*Alle goþ out of owre lond comunly into enemys hondis.*

“Non nostri sed inimici nostri cum thesauro per ipsum extracto de Anglia relevantur.”—*De Juramento Arnaldi*, printed by Lechler, vol. ii. p. 576.

P. 68, l. 24.—*To geten ʒonge childre to here feyned ordre by symonye, &c.*

This charge of seducing children was very commonly made against the friars. In 1358 (?) the University of Oxford passed a statute to prevent the practice, in the preamble of which it is alleged that people fear to send their sons to the University lest they should be led to join the friars (*Munimenta Academica*, p. 204). An award of the King ordered this statute to be cancelled in 1366 (*Parliament Rolls*, ii. 290*b*). Richard Fitzralph, in his *Defensorium Curatorum*, accuses the friars of using their influence as confessors to get children (*munusculis datis allecti*) to join their order. He says that he knew of one child under thirteen who was thus allured.—Brown’s *Fasciculus*, ii. 473. Compare also *S. E. W.* ii. 381.

P. 69, l. 7.—*Oile and crem.*

The crem is the chrism or consecrated oil, with which the child was anointed at baptism. The oil, distinguished here from the chrism, is that for extreme unction. Both were consecrated annually by the bishop.

P. 74, l. 6 from bottom.—*And in presence speke no word.*

From this it seems that it was not customary in the ecclesiastical courts to confront a man with his accusers. A petition of the Commons in 1414, complains that persons cited in the ecclesiastical courts could not obtain a libel of what was put upon them.—*Rot. Parl.* iv. 20.

P. 75, l. 24.—*þe body is neuere þe more traueilid.*

Contrast the dread in which the excommunication of St. Hugh of Lincoln was held. His biographer gives several instances where death or some other fearful punishment fell upon those whom Hugh excommunicated. See especially book iv. chap. 6 of the *Magna Vita*, which is headed “De quodam forestario. De quodam etiam diacono. Et de quadam adolescentula. Et de quibusdam aliis, viri iusti maledictione in carnis interitum datis.”—*Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, ed. J. F. Dimock, p. 178. A curious specimen of the stories told to increase the dread of excommunication will be found on our p. 153.

P. 77, l. 26.—*Deschaunt, countre note.*

Descant (or discant), discantus, a double song; originally the melody or counterpoint sung with a plain-song (Grove's Dict. of Music). Countre-note is, I suppose, simply counter-point. The descant had been introduced long before this; as early, I believe, as the twelfth century, but it had spread slowly, and during the fourteenth century there was a continual and rapid tendency towards increased elaboration in Church music. Descant gradually came to mean a variation (compare Shakspeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act i. sc. ii. 94).

P. 78, l. 16.—*Comunly suche cursed prelati ben no part of holy chirche, in cas þat þei sullen be dampnyd.*

This refers to Wyclif's doctrine of the Church, which, properly speaking, he says, consists only of the elect. “Patet ex fide Christi scripturæ et multiplici testimonio sanctorum, quod nullum est membrum sanctæ matris ecclesiæ nisi persona prædestinata.”—*Supplementum Trialogi*, cap. 2, p. 415.

P. 80, l. 7 from bottom.—*Staciones of rome.*

Stations are churches or altars, to the visitation of which, under certain conditions, some spiritual privileges are attached. Naturally, there is no city in which such privileges are granted so lavishly as in Rome. Mr. Furnivall has printed (*E. E. T. S.*, Nos. 15 and 25) two versions of a poem enumerating the Stations of Rome, with the indulgences given at each.

P. 81, l. 22.—*Also ȝif þe day of doom come bi-fore, &c.*

“Sic enim ex sibi dubio concedit has fictas vanas indulgencias pro multis milibus annorum ultra diem iudicii; sed valeant iste prelati huiusmodi in vacuo infinito, quia in mundo isto non prosunt Christi fidelibus sed multipliciter magis obsunt.”—*Exposition of Matthew xxiv. chap. v.* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 60).

P. 81, l. 5 from bottom.—*þe pope and his ben out of charite.”*

“Multis videtur, cum papa posset faciliter, sine sua depauperacione vel facta injuria alicui, omnes subjectos suos a pena et culpa absolvere injungendo opus neutrum vel bonum de genere, quod omnino excidit de caritate si aliqui de suis subditis sint dampnati.”—*Sermons*, Part iv. 7 (MS. T.C.C. 297b). “Quilibet papa foret fatuus et careret caritate si aliquis secum contemporaneus sit damnatus; cuilibet enim tali posset faciliter talia carismata impartiri. Quid igitur obsesset nisi

invidia quod cuilibet vianti, vel in purgatorio, non tribueret tale donum."—Sermons, Part iv. 21 (MS. T.C.C. 310c). Compare also Trial. iv. 32 (p. 358). It is to be noticed that our text is more moderate than any of these quotations. They imply that the pope claims power to save the wicked from damnation, whereas here he is only asked to save those who are in grace from the pains of purgatory. His power does not extend beyond this; but the vendors of indulgences did not always confine themselves within strictly theological limits when vaunting the article they had to dispose of.

P. 82, l. 16.—*Not for singuler preieres made of vs self for loue of an erþely kyng.*

As to this prayer see note to p. 482, l. 7.

P. 86, l. 13.—*Oure lord jesu crist . . paide him tribute for hym & his chirche.*

"Christus pro se et suo pusillo grege solvit tributum Caesari."—Trial, lib. iv. cap. 18, p. 309.

P. 87, l. 12.—*Prelatis resceyuen & axen gredely þat ilke money for whiche iust blood is spilt."*

When a prelate had capital jurisdiction, the escheats and fines consequent on the criminal's death fell to him (compare Pecock's Repressor, p. 369). If, then, his power were stretched irregularly to putting heretics to death, he would seize their property. By the statute of 2 Henry IV., all lands belonging to convicted heretics were forfeit to the lord from whom they held, and their movable property fell to the king, so that the bishop would not profit unless the offender was his tenant.

P. 88, l. 6—10.—*Atteynnen to kyngis aray . . cursed vengauunce takynge?*

It is possible that here and in one or two other passages of this tract we have reference to the bloody repression of the Commons' rebellion. The Bishop of Norwich was one of the first to break it by armed force.

P. 88, l. 4 from bottom.—*þe to flee to heuene bi-fore þe bodi be cold.*

"Aliter enim non publicarent ut fidem catholicam quod quicunque laborat cum tali episcopo ad hunc finem, [i.e. the Flanders Crusade] vel iuvat ipsum nobiliter in expensis, erit absolutus a pena et culpa, et sic infallibiliter ad patriam advolabit."—Sermons, Part iv. 13 (MS. T.C.C. 302c).

P. 89, l. 21.—*Moldwarpis.*

"Quondam enim Christi vicarii qui erant ut columbe ad fenestras suas, et quasi aquile a terrestribus celitus evolantes, modo versi sunt in talpas circa terrestria fodientes."—Sermons, Part iv. 18 (MS. T.C.C. 307b). Compare p. 147.

P. 91, l. 39.—*Motetis.*

The word is probably derived from the It. *mottetto*, a jest, and was originally applied to a kind of profane music, which in the 13th century was censured by the Church. For the last 300 years it has been exclusively applied to pieces of Church music of moderate length, adapted to Latin words, and intended to be sung at High Mass, either

in place of, or immediately after, the Plain Chaunt Offertorium for the day. See Grove's Dict. of Music.

P. 92, l. 9.—*Dailes*.

This word occurs again in the tract on Clerks Possessioners (p. 129), but I cannot find any other instance of its use. I have no doubt that the meaning is without judgment, *i.e.* without redress. The 'day' appointed for settling quarrels came to mean the Court (cf. German 'Tag' in Land-Tag; French 'jour' as in Grands Jours; and our own 'Diet'), and so the judgment. Thus in the W. V. (both) we find "that I be demyd of ȝou or of mannys day" (1 Cor. iv. 3), and in our A. V. we have still daysman=umpire in Job ix. 33.

P. 97, l. 26.—*Pencions*.

A pension was a yearly payment charged upon a benefice in behalf of some religious house which the patron wished to benefit. This left the appointment to the cure still in the patron's hands; whereas in case of appropriation the religious house was rector and put in a vicar to do the work.

P. 98, chap. 32.—Here is an instance of the tone in which a bishop treated the terrible offence of park-breaking. It is more than two centuries before Wyclif's time, but his contemporaries doubtless did their best to prove that the practice of the Church was uniform, at least in this point. "Hæc prædixi, necesse habens apud vos clamorem facere de quibusdam malis hominibus qui præterita hebdomada parcum meum fregerunt apud Humeres Feld, et unum quem ibi habebam cervum nocte interfecerunt, et projecto capite cum pedibus et intestinis, damnabili furto asportarunt. . . . Ego interim excommunico eos qui parcum meum fregerunt et cervum meum interfecerunt eo anathemate quo Deus iratus percutit animas impiorum. Interdico eis ingressum ecclesiæ, et corpus et sanguinem Christi, et communionem totius Christianitatis. Maledicti et excommunicati sint in domibus, in viis et in agris, in silvis et in aquis, et in omnibus locis quibus inventi fuerint. Computrescat caro eorum qui carnem cervi mei devorarunt, sicut computruit caro Herodis, qui pro Christo fudit sanguinem innocentem, cum Juda traditore et Anania et Saphyra et Dathan et Abiron. Habeant anathema maranatha, nisi cito resipuerint et fecerint mihi satisfactionem. Fiat, fiat, fiat."—Epistolæ Herberti Losingæ, ed. R. Anstruther, p. 70. It is only fair to let the bishop explain his motives: "Hanc excommunicationem, dilectissimi fratres, facio, non quia mihi sit multum de uno cervo, sed quia volo eos penitere et ad confessionem venire et deinceps corrigi a tali furto" (Ibid.). It would be wrong to doubt the sincerity of a man who showed the high value he set upon episcopal correction by paying an enormous sum for the privilege of exercising it. Many bishops in Wyclif's time gave the same proof of earnestness.

P. 99, l. 16.—*Viserid deuelis*.

This expression is used in the tract De Blasphemia (S.E.W. iii. 421): "þese freris wot not wheþer þei ben now viserde devels,

as Schariot was." The reprobate, who will be damned, are devils, but they are masked, since they cannot be distinguished on earth. One of the articles condemned as Wyclif's at the Council of Constance is: "Larvati diaboli, id est religiosi, ex nova simulata religione domesticati, non possunt in filios lucis cum necessario sunt filii diaboli."—Brown's Fasciculus Rer. Exp. i. 278.

P. 99, l. 17.—*Pleien the pagyn of scottis.*

I cannot fix the occasion on which the Scots played this trick, but it may well have happened more than once. We may note that Wyclif, as a native of Teesdale or the neighbourhood, was likely to have heard many stories of border warfare. Perhaps this may account for the somewhat contemptuous way in which he speaks of the Scots and Scotland. See a curious passage in the Trialogus, iii. 3 (p. 139).

P. 100, l. 6.—*Half dede men.*

I suppose this means priests, who should be dead to the world, but have in fact only half renounced it, and are revived to it (comforted) by these wicked prelates.

P. 100, l. 18.—*Forsaken as venym matrimonye, þat is leffel bi holi writt.*

Compare De Officio Pastoralis, p. 46, "Quomodo ergo versi sunt clerici ab altilibus celi in colubres, et discipuli Christi in phariseos colantes culicem et deglucientes camelum? Nam coniugium secundum legem Christi eis licitum odiunt ut venenum," etc. Compare, too, S.E.W. i. pp. 59 and 364 and iii. 190.

P. 102, l. 17.—*Scala celi.*

The Church of St. Maria Scala Cæli is one of three standing some miles from Rome on the Ostian road, near the spot where St. Paul is supposed to have been beheaded. It derives its name from a vision of St. Bernard, who saw some souls for which he was saying mass ascending by a ladder to heaven. The altar where he had this vision is still shown. As to its wealth of indulgences, we read in the Stacyons of Rome:

"In þat place a chapelle ys,
Scala cely called hit ys,
'Laddere of heuen' men clepeþ hit
In honour of our lady, be my witte.

.

Whoso syngeþ masse in þat chappelle
For any frend, he loseþ hym fro helle.
He may hym brynge þorow purgatory y-wys
Into þe blys of paradys.
Ther sowles abyde tylle domis day
In myche Joye, as y þou say.
And iij M^{ll}. þer ar graunted more
Of holy popes þat haue ben þore:
And syx popes graunted þat þanne
That lyen at seynt sebastyan,
Pope vrbā, silvester, & benet,
Lyon, Clement, confermed hyt."

Political, &c., Poems, ed. F. J. Furnivall,
E.E.T.S. No. 15, p. 118.

P. 102, l. 26.—*A prest may be so cursed and in heresie þat he makip not þe sacrament.*

On this point see note to p. 287, l. 12.

P. 103, l. 10.—*Oppressynge pore curatis, &c.*

In the Rolls Office there are many bundles of petitions from bishops and abbots praying the Chancellor to imprison persons who had been under excommunication for forty days. As a rule, the offence is not mentioned, but it is sometimes specified; and one that occurs often is non-payment of the subsidy voted in Convocation. In one case (in 1381), where a schedule of names is given, the amount due from each defaulter is said to be 16 den[arii] de Marcha. The taxes that year were unusually heavy.—See Stubbs' Const. Hist. ii. 449.

P. 103, l. 13.—*Annueleris.*

Annuelers, or annual priests, were those who earned their living by saying annual masses for the dead. In a church where but few masses were required, the parson said them and took the fees, but a priest was often appointed specially for this purpose. Sometimes the engagement was temporary. Daw Topias speaks of

“al these annuelers
that syngen for a tyme,
taking for her traveil
as thei may acorde.”

Wright, *Pol. Poems*, ii. 95.

Often the payment was by yearly stipend, and we find in 1362 a complaint of the Commons that the pestilence has caused such a scarcity of priests that they ask extravagant wages. Their pay was then limited to 5 marks a year.—Rot. Parl. ii. 271*a*; compare iii. 501*b*.

As these clergy were not represented in Convocation, they had not borne their share of the tenths voted by that body, but their increasing number rendered them a tempting subject for taxation, which appears to have been levied, in the form of a poll-tax of 6*s.* 8*d.* on every priest, for the first time in 1380.—Wals. i. 449. A tax thus newly levied might well give rise to such discontent as is expressed in the text, but we cannot place too much reliance on this as an evidence of date, since 20 years later the tax was still spoken of as a recent grievance:

“and thus prelates and persouns
aftir her state,
ben stended to paien
what that nede askith;
but neither freres ne annuelers
save now late.”

Reply of Friar Daw Topias (Wright, *Pol. Poems*, ii. 80).

See Stubbs' Const. Hist. iii. 47 and 367.

P. 104, l. 2.—*Also prelati ben doumbe houndis þat may not berke ;
. . for þei ben so chokid wiþ talow of worldly goodis.*

So in Sermons, “þe fend haþ stranglid þes houndis with talwe, þat þei mai not berke.”—S.E.W. i. 247. Cf. S.E.W. iii. 133 and 440.

P. 116, l. 1.—*Clerkis possessioneris.*

That is, such orders among the clergy as held endowments; monks, canons, and secular chapters. The members of secular chapters could, of course, hold property individually as well as collectively. The monastic vow bound to personal poverty, but allowed property to be held by the convents, which were often very rich.

P. 116, l. 15.—*The evils of appropriation.*

“Constat quidem quod appropriata ecclesia oblaciones et decime stricte ad nidum abbacie colliguntur. Et cum necesse sit curatum de istis vivere, patet quod necesse sit propter istam subtraccionem officium pastoris deficere. Unde vel preficitur vicarius nimis inhabilis ad regendum seipsum conformiter legi dei, et per consequens nimis idioticus ad ducendum hunc populum per artam viam que ducit ad celum, vel preficitur unus antichristi vicarius qui secundum cautelas traditionis humane scit et optat de temporalibus suum populum spoliare.”—*De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 93).

P. 116, l. 21.—*He may not go to scole.*

That is, to the University; but I do not think the “fyndynge of pore children to scole” (l. 27) need be taken in this sense.

P. 118, l. 10.—*Seynt bede wrot, etc.*

The passage referred to is in Bede’s letter to Archbishop Egbert, and runs:—“Et quidem novimus quia, per incuriam regum precedentium donationesque stultissimas, factum est ut non facile locus vacans ubi sedes Episcopalis nova fieri debeat inveniri valeat.”—Giles, i. 122 (printed also in Stubbs and Haddan’s *Councils*, iii. 319). It hardly bears the meaning which Wyclif puts upon it. Bede was advocating the establishment of more bishops, and complains that the places where their sees should have been were already occupied by monasteries. He goes on to suggest that some of these monasteries should be made cathedral churches.

P. 118, l. 16.—*As þe holy martir possidonye writtiþ of seynt austynes lif.*

“Sic enim narrat beatus possidonius de magistro suo bono augustino, quod rogavit cives iponenses reaccipere predia que sibi antea donaverunt, sic quod posset vivere pure de elemosynis, ut vixerunt Christus et sui apostoli, vel de decimis et oblacionibus, ut vixerunt sacerdotes et levite veteris testamenti.”—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesia* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 120b).

P. 122, last line.—*The angel seyd ful sothe.*

“Unde narrat Chronicæ, quod in dotatione ecclesiæ vox angelica audita est in aere tunc temporis sic dicentis: ‘hodie effusum est venenum in ecclesia sancta Dei.’”—*Trial. lib. iv. c. 18*, p. 309, compare pp. 374, 380 of this volume. It is to be noticed that in the *Chronicles* the voice is attributed to the Devil (*Polychronicon*, lib. iv. vol. v. p. 130, ed. Lumby). Bishop Pecock, in his *Repressor*, insists strongly on this point; for “if this be trewe, whi and wherto schulden we beleue his seiying to be trewe; sithen he is oure enemy and oure bigiler” (p. 351).

P. 123, l. 10.—*In here profession þei ben holden dede.*
Compare Jacke Upland :

“Why make you as dede men,
when ye be professed,
and yet ye be not dede,
but more quicke beggars than you were before?”

Wright, *Pol. Poems*, ii. 20.

P. 123, l. 31.—*Of suche religious wrecchis seiþ Robert grosted, &c.*

“Cum secundum lyncolniensem claustralis propter ambicionem temporalium sic egressus sit sicut cadaver mortuum pannis funeralibus involutum, de sepulcro egressum, a diabolo inter homines agitatum.”—Early Sermons, No. 9, MS. Lambeth. The passage is also prefixed as a text (in Latin) to a short tract *Lincolniensis*, printed by Mr. Arnold, S.E.W. iii. 230.

P. 127, l. 18.—*þif a prest of her feyned ordre, &c.*

Among the petitions in the Rolls Office (see note to p. 103), is one of 1387, from Bankyn, prior of the Augustine friars, who “vestræ innotescat reverenciæ (i.e. to the Bishop of Ely, Chancellor) fratres nostros professos, Willelmum Pateshull, Thomam Beauchamp, Robertum Stokusle, et Johannem Sude, habitum et obedientiam sanctæ religionis temere reliquisse,” and goes on to say that without the King’s help he cannot bring them back into the Lord’s fold. It appears that Pateshull had bought himself a chaplaincy to the Pope, under shelter of which he ventured to bring charges of murder, torture, and nameless vices against the brethren of his order (*Chron. Angliæ*, p. 377). Bankyn was a member of the Council of 1382 (*Fas. Ziz.* p. 499). Another petition, dated February, 1382, is from the prior of Sempringham, against John de Whiteby, excommunicated for contumacy and flight. In this case, however, there is nothing to show any connexion with Wyclif or the Lollards.

P. 128, l. 25.—*Seynt Richard.*

“Seynt Richard of Armauþ” occurs in the “Great Sentence of Curse” (S.E.W. iii. 281). It is hardly necessary to say that Fitzralph was never canonized; he did not belong to the right party. It was, however, reported that he deserved the honour of sainthood. “Circa ista tempora Deus declarans justitiam quam magister Fitez Raffe exercuit dum vixit in terris, ut impleretur de eo illud psalmistæ: ‘In memoria eterna erit justus,’ per merita ipsius Ricardi, ad tumbam ipsius, apud Dundalk in Hybernia, plura et magna cotidie operatur miracula; unde, ut dicitur, fratres se male contentos.”—Extract from a continuation of Higden’s *Polychronicon*, printed by Mr. Thompson as an Appendix to the *Chronicon Angliæ*, p. 400. So, too, in the *Chronicon* itself, “Quo in loco (Dundalk) innumera ad laudem Dei fiunt miracula” (p. 48). The passage referred to in the text is in the *Defensorium Curatorum*: “Item aliud damnum tam grave quod tendit ad consumptionem seu evacuationem doctrinæ in secularibus cujuslibet facultatis, est quod isti ordines mendicantium propter infinita lucra

quæ mediantibus prædictis privilegiis de sepulturis et confessionibus et aliis quæ acquirunt, tantum multiplicati sunt in conventibus et personis conventuum quod non reperitur in Studiis communibus de facultate Artium, sacræ Theologiæ et Juris Canonici, ut fertur a pluribus, de facultate Medicinæ aut de facultate Juris Civilis, nisi raro, aliquis utilis multum liber venalis, sed omnes emuntur a fratribus: ita ut in singulis conventibus sit una grandis ac nobilis libraria, ut singuli fratres habentes statum in Studiis, quales sunt modo innumeri, nobilem habent librariam; unde etiam de meis subjectis rectoribus tres aut quatuor misi ad Studium; et dictum est mihi quod quia nec Bibliam eis utilem nec libros alios Theologiæ venales eis congruos ibi poterant reperire, ad suam patriam sunt reversi, aut unus eorum saltem rediit jam. Si ista non sit in clero grandis jactura, nulla poterit in ipso esse, cum ad exitum talem, ut videtur, intendat quod clericus in Ecclesia nullus remaneat propter fratres.”—Brown’s Fasciculus, ii. 474.

P. 129, l. 14.—*A bayli, stiward . . . schullen haue festis . . . riche clopis and huge ziftis.*

Some examples may be culled from the Bursar’s book of King’s Hall, Cambridge (one of the foundations absorbed in Trinity College): “In uno exhennio misso Thomæ Crosse, vis. Item in alio exhennio misso Domino Ivoni de Clyntone, vis. id. . . . Item in alio cultello dato Domino Jervasio Baroni de Scalariis, iiis. vid. Item in cultellis datis famulis suis, iis. . . . Liberabantur menestrallis in convivio Magistri Ricardi Goldingtonæ, iiis.” And again from the Books of Commons of King’s Hall: “pro uno jantaculo facto apud Infra Receptorem Scaccarii pro Cancellario, Thesaurario, Magistro Johanni de Offord, et aliis de Concilio Regis, tractantibus et consulentibus tunc ibidem super negotiis foundationis prædictæ.”—Historical Manuscripts Commission, First Report, pp. 84, 85, 86.

P. 129, l. 27.—*To kepe hym self vnblekkid or defoulid fro þis world.*

There is a curious use of the negative here, the “un” in “unblekkid” being carried on to “defoulid.” In both Wyclifite versions the text runs: “to kepe hym self vndefoulid fro this world.”

P. 129, l. 4 from bottom.—*Caymes castel.*

The phrase Caym’s castle is frequently used by Wyclif for a convent of friars. He explains its meaning in the Trialogus, iv. 33 (p. 362): “Alii autem fingunt . . . quod in Caym fuerunt istae sectae quattuor inchoatae. . . . Et in testimonium istorum, quattuor literae hujus nominis Caim inchoant hos quattuor ordines, secundum ordinem temporis, quo finguntur a fratribus incepisse, ita quod C. Carmelitas, A. Augustinenses, J. Jacobitas et M. Minores significat.”

P. 130, l. 9.—The side-note to chap. 21 is defective. It refers to men who left their convent and profession in order to preach, and so incurred excommunication. See p. 127 and note.

P. 131, l. 9.—*ȝif a synful ydiot bidde hem do þe lesse goode, &c.*

“Et in ista bimembri blasfemia deserunt sectam Christi ex quo insani numero inferunt inconveniencia infinita; ut quod religiosum et

voluntatis Christi est quod talis religiosus subiciat se suo preposito faciendo quicquid mandaverit, licet fuerit stolidissimus ydiota ; quia obediencia ut inquit est virtus maxime meritoria.”—De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 95).

P. 132, l. 5.—*ȝe, for foure penyworþ good curse many þousand soules to helle.*

So Nicolas de Clamengis : “ Sed hodiernis diebus adeo invaluerunt, ut passim pro levissimo quasi delicto, sæpe etiam pro nullo inferantur. Sicque in nullum timorem sed in extremum pervenerunt contemptum.”—De Corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu (Brown’s Fascic. ii. 558). The evil was of old standing. In the eleventh century Peter Damiani pleaded for a less liberal use of excommunication.—Letters to Nicholas II. (i. 7) and Alexander II. (i. 14). It is worth while, however, to note one marked contrast. Damiani’s plea is : “ Indignum quippe est, ut propter unius homuncionis offensam tam innumerabilis multitudo hominum depereat.”—Opera, vol. i. col. 22. The souls perishing from the curse excite his pity. With Clamengis the complaint is, that too-frequent use of excommunication has destroyed its terrors.

P. 133, last line.—*Bryngenge in ȝonge children.*

This charge is more commonly made against the friars. See p. 68, and note on the passage.

P. 134, l. 10.—*Famulorum & benefactorum.*

There is a prayer near the beginning of the Canon of the Mass for the Commemoration of the living, and another at its close for the departed. Both begin with the words : “ Memento, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum,” on which follow the names of those who are specially commemorated on the occasion. Some such commemorations were granted, or at least promised (see Chaucer’s Sompnoure’s Tale) to all benefactors. The greater benefactors had frequently a day assigned to them in which mass was said on their behalf. There is a list of such observances for the University of Oxford in Munimenta Academica, pp. 370—373. Wyclif often speaks with dislike of this famulorum prayer, which, he says, is the most special, as the Paternoster is the most general, of all prayers.—S.E.W. iii. 441. So in the tract on Matt. xxiii. : “ ingeminant multipliciter ‘ famuli tui ’ et ‘ famule tue,’ ac si deus foret dormiens et non recolens merita viatorum.”—MS. Ashburnham, lf. 77.

P. 136, l. 22.—*ȝei ben groundid on labor of here hondis bi here owene reule.*

“ Quia tunc vere monachi sunt, si labore manuum suarum vivunt.”—Rule of St. Benedict, cap. 47.

P. 143, l. 1.—*ȝe office of curates.*

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to remark that the words “curate” and “vicar” have almost exchanged meanings since Wyclif’s time. Curate then meant the beneficed parson in charge of the parish. If he absented himself, he put in a priest to do his work, who was called the vicar. A vicar was needed also where the benefice was appropriated

to a religious house, and gradually the appointment in such cases became a permanent one. In 1402 a statute was passed that in all appropriated churches “soit ordeine Vikair perpetuel, institut et induct canoniquement en ycelle, et covenablement endowez par la discretion de l'ordinaire.”—Rot. Parl. iii. 500. In France the *curé* is still the incumbent, the *vicaire* the curate.

P. 144, l. 17.—*And late alle þat helpe þe comunes in þis grete talliage.*

In the Parliament held at Salisbury in April, 1384, the Commons granted half a fifteenth to the king, with a second half-fifteenth if peace could not be made. “Protestantz outre que l'une Moitee ne l'autre, ne soit en nule manere levable, ne levee, sanz la condicion ensuante. C'est assavoir que l'Estat de Clergie emporte & grante selonc lour afferant a l'une Moitee & l'autre du dite Quinszime, a les termes & jours suis ditz, si bien en salvacion de eux come des ditz Seignours & Communes.”—Rot. Parl. iii. 168*a*. Evidently a strong feeling was abroad that the clergy ought to bear their share of the national burdens, and this gives a slight additional probability to the date I have assigned to the tract.

P. 145, l. 9.—*þe trewe clerk robert grosted writiþ to the pope, etc.*

The passage occurs in the sermon preached before the Pope at Lyons. “Unde pastores, personam Jesu Christi induti non annunciantes [Christi evangelium], etsi non superadderent malitias alias, sunt anti-christi et satanas transfiguratus in angelum lucis.”—Brown's Fasc. ii. 251.

P. 145, l. 24.—*Fewe curatis han þe bible, &c.*

It may be fanciful in remarking that this passage would be characteristic in the mouth of Purvey, Wyclif's chief helper in translating the Bible.

P. 146, l. 8.—*And afterward drawen men to prison.*

Among the petitions for imprisonment of persons who had been forty days under excommunication (see notes to pp. 36, 103), I noted one from the Bishop of Ely (Jan. 16, 1380), against two men excommunicated at the instance of John, rector of Kyngston, “Occasione non solucionis decimarum silve cedue.” It was very likely a case of disputed right, as tithes on woodland were due only on *silva cedua*, i.e. underwood of less than 20 years' growth, and this was a frequent cause of quarrel. In the Parliament Rolls there are several petitions for restraint of the clergy in this matter.

P. 149, l. 5.—*Fatte hors with gaye sadlis & bridelis.*

Wyclif refers often to the extravagance of the clergy in horses. The complaint occurs several times in this volume, and is to be found also in his Latin works: “Cogitemus ergo quod rex regum qui nunquam ante vel post fuit nisi pedestris tunc sine sella non equum bellicosum sed rudem asinam ascendit. Per hoc vero datur ecclesiasticis exemplum quod sumptuosos palefridos non ascendant, bona ecclesie non consumant cum sellis, strepis atque frenis deauratis vel antelis vel postelis de sericis.”—Early Sermons, I. (MS. Lambeth 23).

P. 152, l. 22.—*Late hem enquere þe soþe, &c.*

“Quod fideles resistentes huic pugne sacerdotum (*i.e.* the Flanders Crusade) fuerunt tam per spirituale brachium excommunicati quam per seculares dominos tribulati.”—Exposition of Matthew xxiv. chap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 56).

P. 153, l. 3 from bottom.—*þat a goode cristene man, &c.*

One of the grounds for prosecuting Wyclif was that he taught that excommunication was not binding except when deserved. In the list of conclusions condemned by the Pope in 1377, we find: No. 11. Maledictio vel excommunicatio non ligat simpliciter nisi quantum fertur in adversarium legis Christi. No. 15. Credere debemus quod [papa vel alius] solum tunc solvit vel ligat quando se conformat legi Christi.—Chron. Angliæ, ed. E. M. Thompson, p. 182.

P. 154, l. 12.—*þere comeþ a pardoner wiþ stollen bullis & false relekis.*

Compare Chaucer's account of the pardoner—

“For in his male he hadde a pilwebeer,
Which, that he saide, was our lady veyl:
He seide he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That seynt Petur hadde, when that he wente
Uppon the see, til Jhesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a cros of latoun ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.”

Prologue, 694—700.

Generally speaking we may be inclined to make some allowance for colouring in the descriptions of satirist and reformer—of Chaucer and Wyclif. But in depicting the impudence of the pardoner there was no need—one may almost say no room for exaggeration. See Dr. Jusserand's Essay on Chaucer's Pardoner and the Pope's Pardoners, published by the Chaucer Society 1880.

P. 157, l. 23.—*For now heþene mennus lawis, &c.*

Cum nimis multi seculares hodie studeant in litium facultate, ipsa quoque Theologia in statu secularium paucos habeat sectatores propter abusum Romanæ curiæ, quæ Theologos contempsit, et in omni ecclesiastico gradu lucrativarum scientiarum studiosos præposuit.—Pierre d'Ailly, de Reformatione Ecclesiæ. Brown's Fasc. i. 413. D'Ailly, Archbishop of Cambray, and a Cardinal, was a leader among the orthodox reformers, and took a prominent part in the Council of Constance.

P. 165, l. 27.—*Bete stretis vp & down.*

This use of “bete” recurs twice in this tract. On p. 168, l. 10, we have “betynge of pauement,” a phrase still in use in modern French (*battre le pavé*, *aller et venir sans but*, *sans occupation*.—*Litttré*). On p. 172, l. 15, we have “beten marketis,” which I suppose means to lounge about there merely for the pleasure of the crowd and society. Such loungers were generally in ill repute, as we may see by the secondary sense of *swaggerer*, attaching to “market betor” (see Reeve's Tale, l. 16). We may connect with this use of the word the policeman's “beat.”

P. 167, l. 9.—*Not bi lonynge & bedynge.*

So in Pierce the Ploughman's Crede (line 716):

“And been at lone & at bode · as burgeses vsithe,”

which Mr. Skeat explains “to deal with lendings and biddings, to lend and bid.” It must be noticed, however, that Halliwell says that ‘lone’ is still used in Devon as ‘a supplication for alms,’ and perhaps ‘lonynge and bedynge’ may mean merely ‘begging and praying.’

P. 167, l. 26.—*Priests so vnkunynge þat men scornen hem in seynge of here seruyce, & redynge of here pistil & gospel.*

Giraldus tells a story how Hugh of Lincoln entered a parish church to hear mass, and when mass was over, the parish priest “statim cœpit evangelia multiplicare, primo *Initium sancti evangelii*, deinde *Spiritus Domini*, demum *Salve sancte parens*, et alia quædam nihil attinentia. Episcopus autem his auditis facete subjecit: ‘Quid cras dicturus est presbyter iste, qui hodie quod novit totum effudit?’”—*Gemma Ecclesiastica*, D. 1, xlvi.

P. 169, l. 8.—*Who lyueþ best preieþ best.*

“Opera autem justa plus orant pro homine quam mentis devocio et vocalis formacio labiorum.”—*Lat. Sermons*, iv. 3 (M.S. T.C.C. 293a).

P. 169, l. 25.—*Magnyficat, sanctus, & agnus dei.*

The Magnificat was sung always at vespers. The Sanctus (Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua: Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini: Osanna in excelsis) is sung in the preface to the Mass.

The Agnus Dei (Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; miserere nobis (*bis*) Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi da nobis pacem) is in the ordinary of the Mass.

P. 171, l. 14.—*And ofte ȝe reden it.*

The passage referred to forms the epistle for the Thursday in Passion or Holy Week, as well as for Corpus Christi Day.

P. 172, l. 15.—*Entermeten hem of louedaies, holdynge wiþ fors of armes.*

A love-day was a day appointed for settling differences by arbitration or amicable arrangement. Doubtless it was often useful in avoiding quarrels and litigation, especially among equals, but its comparative informality made it the more dangerous in the hands of a powerful oppressor (compare pp. 234, 243, 245). We get a similar view of the custom in the Vision of Piers Plowman (B. x. 19):

“Who can contreue deceytes an conspire wronges,
And lede forth a loueday to latte with treuthe;
He þat such craftes can to conseil is clepid.”

P. 173, l. 19.—*þei hiȝen faste to be prestis mo þan ben nedful for þe peple.*

“Evidens quidem est quod clerus per talem copiam temporalium peccat in quantitate et qualitate, contrarius voluntati domini jesu christi. In quantitate quidem quo ad numerum proporcionalem aliis partibus ecclesie militantis. Evidens quidem est quod talis mun-

dana prosperitas facit clerum in numero superfluo appetere istum statum."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 29 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 118b).

P. 177, chapter 24.—It should be remembered that, when these tracts were written, chantries had come to be the commonest form of religious foundation. One order after another had fallen away from the ideal aimed at in its foundation, till people had almost ceased to look upon monks and even friars as good men whom it was meritorious to help. In endowing chantry priests, they hoped to get prayers in return for their money, and the formal religion of the day looked upon this as the safest religious investment.

P. 177, l. 4 from bottom.—*Discencion & werris & pestilencis*.

We fear this allusion will not help us much with the date of the tract. According to Walsingham there were, besides the Black Death of 1348, plagues in 1361, 1375, and in the north of England in 1379.

P. 181, l. 12.—*þei wolen answeere for men at domes day*.

So the Minorite promises in *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede* (123-132):

“ And myȝtestou amenden us wiȝ money of þyn owne,
þou chuldest enely bifore Christ in compas of gold
In þe wide windowe westwarde wel niȝe in the myddell,
And seynt Fraunces himself schall folden the in his cope
And presente the to the trynitie & praie for thy sinnes.

.
þouȝ þou conne nouȝt þi Crede Kare þou no more.
I schal asoilen þe, syre, & setten it on my soule.”

P. 181, l. 21.—*Jubilees þat we reden not of, of kyngis ne emperouris*.

A jubilee was celebrated when a monk or friar had completed the fiftieth year of his profession. The order for the ceremony is quoted from the Carmelite constitutions in Ducange, s.v. “Jubileus.” The Jubileus was excused from many requirements of the rule.

P. 182, l. 22.—*þei wole make many doseyns to forsweren hem*.

The “doseyns” are, of course jurors, whose corruption was one of the great difficulties in the way of securing even-handed justice. In 1364 it was enacted that any juror taking money for his verdict should be fined ten times the amount of the sum in question (Rot. Parl. ii. 288 a); but the severity of the punishment does not seem to have put an end to the offence. A petition of 1382 shows how juries could be used for extortion and oppression, and although much may be laid to the opportunities given by the troubles of the previous year, we cannot doubt that abuses were always frequent. Compare the Coke's Tale of Gamelyn, l. 785—

“ For he was fast about, bothe day and other,
For to hyre the quest to hangen his brother.”

It is only fair to the jurors to remember that they sometimes suffered from the spite of the party who thought himself aggrieved, and that it

was dangerous to give a verdict against a powerful suitor, although not many could, like Gamelyn, hang the unjust "sisours."

P. 183, l. 18.—*Forsweren hem wittyngly for here dyner & a noble.*

The noble was half a mark, or six shillings and eightpence. As the shilling then contained 216 grs., it would be worth about fifteen shillings and sixpence of our present coinage. Weight for weight, its purchasing power was greater than now, but it is hard to fix a standard by which to reckon this. Mr. Seebohm, measuring it by the price of wheat, says four times, which would make the juryman's fee for perjury about £3, besides the dinner. See an article by Mr. Seebohm in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1870.

P. 184, l. 5.—*Abuses of Consistory (or Ecclesiastical) Courts.*

The ecclesiastical courts, which were very numerous, determined all causes matrimonial and testamentary. "There were other minor suits for wrongs for which the temporal courts afforded no remedy, such as slander in cases where the evil report did not cause material loss to the person slandered."—Stubbs' *Const. Hist.* iii. 345. They had besides to enforce the payment of tithes and church dues, and were charged with disciplinary power for punishment of adultery, fornication, perjury, and other vices which did not come under the common law. The reputation of the "summoner" is enough to show how abuses pervaded the action of these courts. Professor Stubbs has summed up the case concerning them in his *Const. Hist.* iii. 373.

P. 190, l. 6 from bottom.—*What is actif life & contemplatif.*

Wyclif would not allow that the life of the cloister had any special claim to be called contemplative. What was his idea of contemplative life may be seen in one of his English sermons, No. cxiv. (S.E.W. i. 382). He insisted that contemplation would not make a man more slothful in preaching. In a Latin tract on Matthew xxiv. he says: "Quidam pure viventes secundum legem domini Jesu Christi, qui in lecto contemplacionis per vices dormiunt et surgunt vivacius spirituale cibarium populo ministrando" (Ashburnham, lf. 63b). He goes on to say that those who fail to lead such a life, although they may be hermits or anchorites, will be damned. Yet in one tract, and that a late one, he uses "activi" in the sense of laymen.—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 52b). I notice this as a warning not to lay too much stress on single expressions, especially when they belong to the current theology of his time.

P. 191, l. 21.—*Matynes of oure lady.*

One of the seven hours of our Lady which, according to the local use, were said with the canonical hours; and often without them.

P. 192, l. 26.—*Sire iacke or hobbe.*

Sire is here the common title given to a priest, as occasionally in Shakspeare.

P. 193, last line, &c.—*Saying Matins more binding than celebration of Mass.*

It is a mortal sin to celebrate without having said Matins (*i.e.*

Nocturns and Lauds). A constitution of Archbishop Reynolds says: "Nullus Sacerdos parochialis præsumat Missam celebrare antequam Matutinale persolverit officium, et primum et tertiam de die.—Lyndwoode, lib. iii., tit. 23. The object of such rules was, no doubt, to insure that the celebrating priest should be duly prepared for his functions, but one result of them was, as noticed in the text, to make the saying of hours more binding than celebration, since to say the "hours" was binding on every priest.

P. 194, l. 6.—*Antifeners*:

Antiphonarium, a book containing the Antiphons or Anthems. "Nota quod tale Antiphonarium non solum continebit in se Antiphonas . . . sed etiam Invitatoria, Hymnos, Responsorialia, Versus, Collectas, Capitula et alia quæ pertinent ad decantationem Horarum Canoniarum."—Lyndwoode, lib. iii. tit. 27.

P. 194, l. 6.—*Graelis*.

"Stricte ponitur Gradale pro eo quod gradatim cantatur post epistolam; hic tamen ponitur pro libro integro in quo contineri debent Officium aspersionis aquæ benedictæ, Missarum inchoationes sive Officia; Kyrie cum versibus Gloria in Excelsis, Gradalia, Halleluja, et Tractus Sequentiæ, Symbolum cantandum in Missa Offertoria, Sanctus, Agnus, Communio, &c., quæ ad Chorum spectant in Missæ solennis decantatione."—Ibid.

P. 198, l. 2 from bottom.—*For alle angelis & men & wommen þat schullen be sauȝd ben goddis kyngdom & holy chirche.*

This tenet, that the true Church consists only of the predestinate, is often insisted on by Wyclif. It is found also in the parallel passage in the tract printed by Mr. Arnold: "Alle þylke þat schulleþ be in blysse after þe dome ryȝtwysliche may be cleped holy church."—S.E.W. iii. 101.

P. 199, l. 16 — *Confermed*.

Probably a mistake of the scribe for "conformed," although "confermed" may be taken in the sense of firmly united.

P. 204, l. 14.—*þis addyng to is trewe.*

Contrast on this point the tract printed by Mr. Arnold, S.E.W. iii. 112: "But for it is hard [to] men to grounden hem [leeue to add þus], siþþe," &c. I quote thus far, as Mr. Arnold's text is defective; the words in brackets are supplied from the Dublin MS. C.C.

P. 205, l. 4 from bottom.—*For whanne wymmen ben turnyd, &c.*

"Sicut enim femina ad bonum dedita est specialiter ecclesie iuvativa, quia organum domini in maria et aliis sibi in virtute similibus; sic femina seducta cautelis diaboli superat in malicia multos viros, cum sit speciale rethe diaboli."—Sermons, Part II. 22 (T.C.C. 202b).

P. 206, l. 7.—*He þat kan best pleie a pagyn of þe deuyl.*

I think this must refer to miracle-plays, in which the devil was usually the leading comic part. Grossetete, in a circular to his archdeacons, complains that the clergy sometimes take part in such plays: "Faciunt etiam, ut audivimus, clerici ludos quos vocant miracula," and he

desires that they may be put a stop to: "Miracula etiam et ludos supra nominatos et scotales, quod est in vestra potestate facili, omnino exterminetis."—Roberti Grossetete Epistolæ, ed. H. R. Luard, Letter cvii.

P. 206, l. 23.—*þe roten body, þat is wormes mete & a sak of drit.*

"Cogitaremus itaque quod femina quam sic tangimus est, nedum pro tempore suo horrendum cadaver putridum, sed in presenti, secundum regionem nutriciam intuita, saccus stercorum."—De Mandatis Divinis, cap. 29 (MS. Univ. Camb., Ll. 5, 13). The same idea recurs, S.E.W. iii. p. 125.

P. 207, l. 3 from bottom.—*Seynt steuene was ful of grace.*

Our A.V. has "full of faith," but the Vulgate "plenus gratia et fortitudine."

P. 208. l. 3.—*God þe trinyte is wiþ eche creature bi myzt, wisdom & goodnesse to kepe it.*

Wyclif's doctrine on this point is explained in Trialogus, book ii. chap. xi.: "Certum est quod necessario Deus conservet locum quemlibet et quamlibet creaturam, et non conservat per potentiam ab eo distinctam [or distantem]: nec potest vicissim adesse et deesse suæ fabricæ. Ideo necessario est ubique. . . . Deus necessario secundum totam suam essentiam perpetuo est ubique. . . . Ideo Deus habet unum modum excellentem et proprium, quo essentialiter est ubique. Et cum in Deo sit virtus atque potentia, quæ realiter est divina essentia, patet quod Deus virtualiter et potentialiter est ubique."—(Ed. Lechler, p. 113.) It is probably this doctrine which led to the charge against Wyclif of holding "quod Christus est vilissima creatura, cum sit ipsa materia prima."—Fasc. Ziz. p. 2.

P. 211, l. 7.—*Trentalis.*

A Trental is an office of 30 masses to be said on so many successive days for the dead. It also means the offering made on consideration of such masses. Special observances were usual on the 30th day from the death. In the *Academy* of October 18th, 1879, Mr. Peacock printed the will of Sir Thomas Cumberworth (A.D. 1450), which gives us a good example of the way in which money was distributed on such occasions: "I will the interment be made at my xxx day & the abbot of Thorneton do the masse derige & the exquies & have xxs & the vs iiij^d that he owes me aforesaid & I wil the abbot of Neusom & the abbot of Welhow yf thay both come to my xxx day haf ather of tham xiis iiij^d and ilke prior & prioris that comes to the xxx day hafe vis viij^d and ilke chanon or none that comes to the said xxx day have xx^d & ilke prest & frere that comes that day to deryge & masse hafe iiij^d." Further, two priests are to sing at the altar where his wife and father and mother are buried, "& that ilken of tham haf C^s to say the Trentall for hus in all the hast that may be getyn thereto." So universal was the custom of having a trental said for the dead, that we may notice in the Poor Men's Gild of Norwich an order, "þat any broþer or sister of þis gilde deye vii mile abouten þe Cite, or withinnen the cite, alle þe bretherin and sistrin shullen ben at þen enter yng

of þe dede corps, and offerin at his messe, and ȝeuen xxx^d for xxx messes singing for þe soule, and for alle cristen soules.”—English Gilds, E.E.T.S. No. 40, p. 41. In the Sarum Missal the *Missa pro defunctis* has a special prayer, secret, and post-communion for the 30th day.—Sarum Breviary, ed. Proctor and Wordsworth, ii. 529. It seems that sometimes the 30 masses were all said on one day. In the ordinance for the gild of St. Katherine, Aldersgate, the wardens are to summon the friars to say the dirge, “and on þe morwe to seie a trent of masses at same freres.”—Id. p. 8.

P. 212, l. 5.—*Whanne riche men ben dede wiþ dirige, &c.*

“Why covet you not to burie
poor folk among you
sith that they been most holy
as ye saine that ye ben for your povertie?
Why will ye not be at her diriges
as ye have been at rich mens,
sith God praiseth hem more
than he doth other men?

Jacke Upland, *Wright's Political Poems*, ii. 22.

Our last note supplies a good answer to Jacke's questions.

P. 212, l. 10.—*Stryuen & flȳtten for þe dede careyne.*

Any one who wishes to see a lively description of such a struggle will do well to turn to Erasmus' colloquy, *Funus*.

P. 213, l. 6 from bottom.—*Liynge*, probably for *leizynge* = “laughing.”

P. 213, l. 3 from bottom.—*pat longeþ to iurdiccion of prelatiſ.*

Fornication and adultery were cognizable only by the ecclesiastical courts, and the bishops resented any lay attempts at repressing these vices. Such attempts seem to have been made occasionally. I have already (note to p. 35) mentioned one on the part of the London citizens, related with much indignation by Walsingham. About the same time, Aug. 3, 1382, I find a monition against the *ballivi* of Canterbury, who have presumed to try adulteries, etc., “inquirentes cognoscentes et judicantes, penas bannicionis et alia deformia et noviter adinventia supplicia pro hujusmodi criminibus auctoritate sua propria imponent” (Lambeth Registers). Banishment must have been a most objectionable punishment in the eyes of the ecclesiastical officials, since it dried up the sources of revenue.

P. 218, l. 14.—*Fleynge fro suche companye & abstynence & saad traueile is best medecyne aȝenst lecherie.*

“Et ad hoc valet ista medecina triplex precipue; circumspecta corporis maceracio, loci et persone cum qua peccaretur declinacio, et omnino tocius virtutis cognitiue assidua et sancta occupacio.”—De Mandatis Divinis, c. 29 (MS. Univ. Camb., Ll. 5. 13).

P. 220, l. 13.—*Sixtene condicions of charite.*

The notes of charity given by the Apostle in 1 Cor. xiii. 4, may be counted as sixteen, and are so enumerated in the tract on Faith, Hope, and Charity, p. 353.

P. 223, l. 6.—*þat þei approprien not parische chirchis.*

This is not the only place where Wyclif notices that appropriations prevent the material repair of the church, as well as the pastoral care of the parish: "Alii autem attendentes ad seculum horrent quod iste basilice appropriate tantum deficiunt in tectis et ceteris ornamentis. Sed infinitum gravior horror est quod populus ille, tanquam desertus a domino, deficit in spirituali pastore qui ipsum duceret ad beatitudinem secundum regulas legis Christi."—*De Nova Prevaricancia Mandatorum*, cap. 5 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 93b).

P. 224, l. 10. *Siþ robert grosted clepiþ siche exempcion þe deuclis nettis.*

I have not been able to trace this expression, but in his sermon preached before the Pope, Grossetete denounces the evil of exemptions. "Sic ligantur pastores," he says, "quod lupis in gregem grassantibus nec ad modicum possint occurrere."—Brown's *Fascic.* ii. 255.

P. 224, l. 12.—*Siþ it is a grete sentence of þe chirche þat who euere doþ azenst þe riȝtful wille of a dede man is cursed.* See note to p. 48, line 13.

P. 224, l. 23.—*Mortuaries.*

These were fines or dues payable to the parson or vicar of the church where a man was buried. The religious in burying rich men naturally caused quarrels as to the payment of mortuaries. These dues were sometimes of considerable amount. Thus in one case we find the prior of Wenlock claiming one-third of all the deceased possessed at the time of his death, according to the custom of the diocese of Hereford.—*Rot. Parl.* ii. 38. In another case the chaplains of a free royal chapel complain that the Chapter of Lichfield have opened a chapel and cemetery, and taken away their mortuaries.—*Rot. Parl.* ii. 77.

P. 224, l. 8 from bottom.—*þe schame of grete synneris ȝif þei were schryue at here owene curatis.*

FitzRalph, in his *Defensorium Curatorum*, insists strongly on the evil of confessing to friars, and gives this among many reasons: "Quod in confessione ordinario facta, est erubescencia amplior quam cum confessio est fratri facta." Of the extent to which friars heard confessions, he says, "Ego enim in mea dioecesi (ut puto) habeo dua millia subditorum qui singulis annis propter sententias excommunicationis latas contra homicidas voluntarios, fures publicos, incendiarios et istis consimiles sunt excommunicationis sententiis involuti, de quibus vix veniunt ad me seu pænitentiarios meos quadraginta in anno; et recipiunt sacramenta omnes tales ut caeteri, & absoluntur vel absoluti dicuntur, nec per alios quam per fratres" (*Fasc. Rerum. Expet.* ii. 68). It is to a friar that Mede comes for confession in *Piers Plowman*, B. text, iii. 35.

P. 224, l. 2 from bottom.—*To homly wiþ gentil wymmen.*

Compare a passage in the tract *On the Leaven of Pharisees*, p. 10.

P. 227, line 5 from bottom.—*þe fend moueþ summe men, etc.*

This should be compared with the tract *De Sex Jugis*, printed in Dr. Lechler's Appendix, in which Wyclif insists strongly on the duty of obedience to masters, even when tyrannical.—Lechler, ii. 601.

P. 228, l. 15.—*Weilynge or languyschynges*.

In our A.V. dotting, but in Vulgate “*languens circa questiones.*”

P. 229, l. 9.—*Pore prestis . . . charge seruauntis to be suget pouz lordis bi tirauntis.*

“Homines sic tractati civiliter, quantumcunque in donis Dei gratuitis et gracia Christi resplendeant, debent humiliter injurias istas pati: et per passiones hujusmodi debent communiter plus mereri quam in aliis officiis nunc laudatis. Sic enim meruerunt Christi martires paciendo et sic docet Petrus dominis, et discipulis, subici paciendo.”—*De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, c. 3 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 86).

P. 231, l. 25.—*Come and reproue him.*

“Seke þe doom, helpe þe hym that is oppressid, deme þe to the fadirles and modirles child, defende þe a widewe. And come þe and repreue þe me, saith the Lord.”—*Later Wyclifite Version*. “Et venite et arguite me.”—*Vulgate*.

P. 231, l. 27.—*Mercy and trewþe kept of kyngis.*

There is something wrong with the text here. The Vulgate has: *Misericordia et veritas custodiunt regem*; and the W.V. “Mercy and treuthe kepen the king.”

P. 233, last line.—*Païen not þerfore but white stickis.*

There was often a difficulty in getting tallies cashed. In the Parliament of 1376 Lord Nevill was impeached for buying up tallies of assignments made by the king to various persons. These he had got full payment for, while paying little or nothing to their owners. He was said to have made £300 in this way. Two persons are mentioned as having been thus defrauded—the Lady de Ravensholme, and Reynold Love, a merchant of London (Rot. Parl. iii. 328). When persons such as these rated tallies so low, it may be guessed what was their value to poor country people, whose goods had been taken by purveyors. Cf. God Spede the Plough (appended to Mr. Skeat’s ed. of *Pierce the Ploughman’s Crede*):

The Kyngis purviours also they come,
To have whete and otys at the Kyngis nede;
And over that befe and Mutton,
And butter and pulleyn, so god me spede!
And to the kyngis courte we moste it lede,
And our payment shal be a styk of a bough;
And yet we most speke faire for drede—
I praye to God, spede wele the plough.

P. 234, l. 10.—*But rapere wyþholden pore men here hire.*

“In lege antiqua Levitici 19^{mo}. dicitur ‘Non morabitur opus mercenarii tui aput te usque mane.’ Quamvis autem istud exponatur communiter quod post completionem laboris opus mercenarii non debet remanere per tempus culpabile tenebrosus, tamen assistente indigentia mercenarii debet merces retribui in completionem laboris. . . Novit mundus quantum injuste multi mercenarii sunt tractati nunc, labores indebitos ex diurnitate temporis, ex qualitate operis, et ex aliis circumstantiis exigendo.”—From tract *De Sex Jugis* (Lechler, ii. 598).

P. 234, l. 27.—*Lordis stryuen wiþ here tenauntis to brynge hem in þraldom.*

Among the petitions presented in the first Parliament of Richard II. is one complaining that the villeins and tenants get copies of Domesday book which they use to assert their freedom. Coming from the landlords, this petition declares this action to be wrongful, and attributes it to certain agitating counsellors, who misinterpret the document. Things had got so bad already (in 1377) that the peasantry helped each other to resist distraint.—Rolls of Parliament, iii. 21*b*.

P. 240, l. 22.—*Lay correction of clerks.*

“Moveri potest ulterius si secularis populus debet de prelato hujusmodi judicare, nam sic liceret ipsum deponere et decimas et oblationes suas subtrahere; sed tunc forent forus ecclesiasticus et seculare judicium commixta ad invicem et confusa, et contra istud militant multe leges. Sed hic videtur multis quod rex, cujus interest pacificare rempublicam, debet impedire adulteria, furta et alia crimina, sed specialiter in prelatis, cum ipsa precipue perturbant rempublicam, et patet exemplum 3 Regum 2 de Salamone.”—De Sermone Domini in Monte, chap. 32 (MS. T.C.C. 393*c*).

P. 241, l. 29.—*Paul's appeal to Cæsar.*

“Quomodo igitur renueret papa vel prelatus aliquis judicari per judicem secularem, cum vas electionis, instar magistri sui Christi judicari sic eligentis, appetit se taliter judicari.”—De Sermone Domini in Monte, c. 32 (MS. T.C.C. 393*b*).

P. 242, l. 4 from bottom.—*A market betere.*

The presence of priests at markets seems to have been a scandal. John Myrc, in his “Instructions to Parish Priests,” says—

“Markets and feyres I the forbede
But hyt be for the more nede.”

E.E.T.S. No. 31, p. 2.

Market betere is usually explained as a swaggerer, but it seems here to be used only in the sense of a frequenter of markets. Compare beten marketis, p. 172.

P. 243, l. 21.—*Lords meyntenen . . extorsioneris, robberies, & reuers.*

The habit of keeping bands of violent and disorderly retainers, by liveries and other gifts, to maintain their patrons' quarrels, was common among the great people of the time. Statutes and petitions in Parliament were useless against it. In one petition the Commons say—“qar si les Meintences des Grantz soient tollez les faux felons & malveys serront puniz & les Leyes et la Pees meyntenuz” (Rot. Parl. ii. 165). The disorder did not diminish in the first part of the fifteenth century, as the Paston Letters show very clearly, and it was reserved for the strong hand of the Tudors to put down the abuse.

P. 246, l. 15.—*Or wis of bildyng of castelis.*

This has often been supposed to allude to William of Wykeham, but it is by no means certain that it has any personal reference.

P. 271, l. 6.—*þe þridde heresie þat may hoold of olde synnys.*

Mr. Hertridge suggests that for “may” we should read “many.” I am rather inclined to take the reading of A.A., correcting “maþ” to “makip”—“þat makip hoord of olde synnys.” Cf. p. 476, l. 25—“Abbeys & collegies ben hordis of synne.”

P. 277, l. 17.—*Fees for proving wills.*

Compare the petition of the Commons—“que y puisse estre declare en cest Parlement de certain combien les Curatours prendront pur proeve de chescun Testament et pur l’acquittance d’ycels, car ils preignent au present tres grantz fyns & extorcions pur ycels, a grant damage du poeple” (Rot. Parl. i. Ric. 1. vol. iii. p. 25*b*).

P. 277, l. 22.—This proposal for lending freely to poor men sounds revolutionary; but, as no means are proposed for carrying it out, we may take it to be only the expression of a pious wish for the extirpation of a practice which every one thought sinful. In 1376 the Commons petitioned for more repressive laws against usury—“Come l’orrible vice de l’usure soit taunt espaundu & usee parmy la terre, que la vertu de charite, sanz quele nul puist estre sauve, est bien pres tote perdue” (Rot. Parl. ii. 350*b*). It may be worth while to quote Wyclif’s words as to the wickedness of usury: “Usura autem videtur habere istam blasphemam maliciam quod usurarius vendit tempus, quod dare est deo proprium; et postposita spe misericordie et retribucionis divine propter hoc quod gracia bonitatis sue adjuvat fratrem suum, feneratur ista temporalia principaliter pro spe lucri; et quia iste sic postponit divinam ordinanciam, usura racionabiliter inter peccata maxima est damnata.”—De Sermone Domini in Monte, cap. 58 (MS. T.C.C. 377*b*). Cf. S.E.W. iii. 154, where there is a long piece on usury in a tract which is almost certainly Wyclif’s.

P. 278, at bottom.—*Amortisement by mean hands.*

One of the petitions in the first Parliament of Richard II. is directed against this practice. I quote it for comparison with the point in the text—“Pur ceo que les Religiouses purchacent terre, et fount autres de ceo estre enfeffez et les ditz Religiouses pernantz les profitz. Et auxi terre lour est done & autres persones enfeffez d’icelles et les ditz Religiouses de ce pernont les profitz. Q’en celle cas & en touz autres que purront estre ymaginez, q’ils puissent estre ajugez en cas d’Estatutz de Religious’ entfaitz, & que la Roi et autres Seigneurs eient l’avantage en celle cas come est ordeigne en le dit Estatut.”—Rot. Parl. iii. 19*a*. It is to be noticed that the petition was presented also in the last Parliament of Edward III.

P. 279, l. 14.—*þe wast tresour hanged on stockis & stones.*

“Unde ad honorem foret sanctorum et utilitatem ecclesie, quod distributa forent pauperibus jocalia sepulcrorum quibus stulte ac eciā inaniter sunt ornata.—Sermons, part ii. No. 22 (MS. T.C.C.).

P. 285, l. 24.—*þei ben nedid to spoyle here tenauntis.*

“Magnates depauperant ac ipsos necessitant ad pauperes suos

tenentes et subditos insuetis tallagiis onerandum.”—*Purgatorium Secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 50).

P. 286, l. 3.—*No man reuersiþ God.*

“Reversiþ” here is used (or miswritten) for “resisteth.” The Vulg. is *quis restitit ei et pacem habuit?* The reference should be to Job ix. 4.

P. 286, l. 14.—*þat makip a man seruauunt to nouzt.*

This has reference to the doctrine which Wyclif had learned from Augustine (see Fasc. Ziz. liv), “that evil has no substantive existence, but is simply the absence of good, as darkness is the absence of light.” Thus, he says in the *Triologus* (i. 9) that sin has no ‘idea,’—“sed homo cognoscendo creaturam peccabilem et quod peccat, sine ydea, hoc est per carentiam vacuitatis ydeae (ut dicit Lincolniensis) cognoscit peccatum” (p. 67). Again, “Sed cum peccati non sit ydea, nec peccati productiuitas vel producibilitas est in Deo; oportet concedere peccatum esse et adesse vel potius abesse deficere” (p. 74). See Lechler, i. 509.

P. 287, l. 12.—*Unable to . . . zeue ony sacramentis.*

Wyclif has been said to make the efficacy of the Sacrament depend on the worthiness of the priest, and this passage gives some colour to the charge. But if we compare it with other utterances on the same subject, we shall find that we must not take the words absolutely in this sense. In a tract ‘De precationibus Sacris,’ after reciting the decrees forbidding attendance at the mass of an incontinent priest, he goes on—“Nowe siþ lecherie makip priests unable to . . . seie masse” (S.E.W. iii. 225). Here we have nearly the same expression as in the text, but the inability refers only to legal disqualification, not to the absence of Divine aid in consecration. In the same tract he lays down clearly the orthodox doctrine: “a cursed man doþ fully þe sacramentis þouþ it be to his dampnyng” (p. 227). In the same spirit he says of a priest who is not in grace, “nec sine falsitate dicit verba sacramentalia, licet prosint capacibus.” Wyclif’s real view seems to have been that since the efficacy of the Sacrament depended on the assistance of Christ, there was every reason to believe that the faithful would not be allowed to suffer for the unworthiness of the priest. Still the priest who was in mortal sin was no true priest, and had forfeited all claim to Christ’s aid, and therefore we could only suppose and hope in each case it was given, without asserting it as a matter of faith. “Et sic visa hostia adoro ipsam conditionaliter, et omnimode de adoro corpus Domini quod est sursum” (Trial. p. 281). Compare chap. 38 of the tract on Prelates (p. 102), Wyclif’s authorship of which is too uncertain to allow us safely to draw arguments from it as to his opinions. Dr. Lechler has stated the case for Wyclif’s orthodoxy very strongly, i. 608 *et seq.* (ii. 168 of the English translation).

P. 289, l. 25.—*Secular jurisdiction over clerks.*

Compare p. 240 and note.

P. 297, l. 1.—*Crist louede persones of hem, as weren poul and nychodeme.*

Cf. Of the Leaven of Pharisees, p. 2.

P. 298, l. 16.—*And as þei seyen freris weren þenne and longe bifore.*

Referring to the Carmelites, who pretended to a direct descent from Elijah.

P. 299, l. 27.—*þoure makid birþins.*

Burthens of your making. This curious use of the participle is not suggested by the Latin of the Vulgate, which runs—"ipsi uno digito vestro non tangitis sarcinas."

P. 301, l. 25.—*þe secte of Macamethe, etc.*

"Scimus quidem quod secta saracenica multis fidei nostre articulis autoritate legis dei consenciat, et multos ritus honestos atque laudabiles ultra has sectas observat; sed quia in necessariis secundum legem Christi deficiunt nec autoritatem ab ipso accipiunt, ideo sunt infideles filii diaboli fugiendi. Quare igitur non iste secte que Christi ecclesie magis nocent."—*Purgatorium secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, 53b).

P. 310, l. 4.—*Jealousies between the different orders.*

"Cum sicut dicunt, ecce hic et ecce illuc est capud ecclesie, ita dicunt hujus generacionis filii, quod in ordine meo oportet hominem salutem consequi; alius autem quod non, sed ordine meo oportet viantem compendiosius et excellencius venire ad patriam; et in omnibus istis postponitur et contempnitur simplex religio Christiana."—*Sermons*, II. 48 (MS. T.C.C. 222c). For an amusing picture of these jealousies, see Pierce the Ploughman's Crede.

P. 310, l. 20.—*þer ben now many makid anticristis.*

"Et nunc Antichristi multi facti sunt."—Vulgate.

P. 310, l. 28.—*Ilche spirit þat lousiþ jhesu.*

"Omnis spiritus qui solvit Jesum."—Vulgate.

P. 312, l. 24.—*Ofte we erren in entent and desyren veniaunce in rancour.*

This characteristic confession of Wyclif's fault of temper should not be overlooked. Cf. Introduction, p. xlvii.

P. 314, l. 7.—*Wo is me for I heclde myn pees.*

"Væ mihi, quia tacui!"—Vulgate.

P. 314, l. 16.—*Poul biddiþ tymothe to reprove, to preie, & to blame.*

"Argue, obsecra, increpa."—Vulgate.

P. 316, l. 14.—*Sanctity of the friar's habits.*

This common superstition is several times mentioned by Wyclif. "Et tantam vim virtutis ponunt in suis habitibus quod sperant si persona aliqua, vir vel femina, moriatur in ipsis non dampnabitur ad infernum."—*Purgatorium Secte Christi* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 51b). And again, "Unde multe sunt hereses in tali materia introducte. Ut quod sint habitus fratrum tam sacri et tam virtuosi quod nullus mortuus in istis habitibus dampnabitur ad infernum."—*Tract on Matthew xxiii. cap. 3* (MS. Ashb. lf. 72). Compare Colloquies of Erasmus: *Funus* and *Exsequiæ Seraphicæ*.

P. 316, l. 29.—*And þat men mai see wel bi growyng & colour of here body."*

Cf. song in the Appendix to Brewer's *Monumenta Franciscana* (p. 602):

"Men may se by their contynaunce
That thai are men of grete penaunce,
And also that their sustynaunce
Symple is and wayke.
I have lyued now fourty ȝers,
And fatter men about the neres
ȝit sawe I neuer than are thes frers,
In contreys ther thai rayke."

P. 321, l. 7.—*Men þat ben wandrynge in þis weye.*

Viator is the word generally used by Wyclif in his Latin works to signify man living on the earth.

P. 321, l. 9.—*What lif þat plesiþ more to god is betere preiere to god.*

"Cum quelibet res dicit deo seipsam, fidelis operarius suis operibus deum melius et ecclesie utilius exoraret."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 29 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 109b).

P. 321, l. 17.—*þat þei liuen honestliche in chirche.*

"Arguitur enim communiter quod fratres multum prosunt ecclesie et non nocent, cum habent domos atque ecclesias, quibus regna multipliciter decorantur."—*Supplementum Trialogi*, cap. viii. (p. 444, Lechler's ed).

P. 322, l. 8.—*þre þyngis shulden moue men to be glad of sich byldyng.*

There is something wrong here. Wyclif cannot have put these three reasons for gladness into the mouth of his opponents, even in irony; while to himself they would be causes of sorrow, as he says (l. 20).

P. 327, l. 26.—*Mathew telliþ hou crist confessed to his fadur.*

"In illo tempore respondens Jesus dixit: confiteor tibi Pater, etc."—*Vulg.*

P. 328, l. 5.—*Side note.*

In the Dublin MS. C.C. this tract is not divided into chapters.

P. 328, l. 21.—*Til Innocens cam.*

"Duplex est confessio singulariter deo facta et confessio ex institutione Innocencii tercii facta proprio sacerdoti. Prima est dignior, fundabilior et necessarior quam secunda, quia de prima confessione et penitencia loquitur scriptura generaliter et nusquam de secunda; immo videtur multis, cum ecclesia melius militavit per mille annos et amplius sine illa."—*Sermons*, Part iv. Ser. 6 (MS. T.C.C. 296c). Confession was first made of general obligation in the 4th Lateran Council under Innocent III.

P. 329, l. 3.—*Makers of þis lawe weren so marrid, etc.*

"Sed gramadici [sic] cum adiutorio logicorum impugnant hanc legem, dicentes quod solum pro ermafroditis de virtute vocabuli fuit facta."—*De contrarietate duorum Dominorum*, cap. 6 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 46b).

The bull runs "Omnis utriusque sexus."

P. 331, l. 14.—*Propur prestus ben vnable.*

The exaggeration of difficulties here is rather extravagant. The proper priest was as a rule the curate of the parish, but there were many cases in which the penitent might choose another confessor, *e.g.* if the priest were indiscreet, a babbler, or in any way personally affected by the sin to be confessed (see Myrc's Instructions for Parish Priests, line 824 et seq.). The real mischief seems rather to have been in the multitude of licensed confessors, friars and others, who had no knowledge of their penitents, and exercised no good influence over them. Chaucer's Parson in his "Tale" insists upon the evil of "de-partyng of schrift." Cf. notes to pp. 9 and 224.

P. 332, last line.—*Men seyn þat greks han.*

The Greek Church enjoins private confession, and has a special office for the administration of the rite. The form of absolution in that Office is as follows: "O my spiritual child, who dost confess to my humility, I, a humble sinner, have no power on earth to remit sins. This God alone can do. Yet by reason of that divine charge which was committed to the Apostles after the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in the words: 'Whosoever sins ye remit,' etc., and by that encouraged, we say: whatsoever thou hast confessed to my most lowly humility, and whatsoever thou hast omitted to confess, either through ignorance or any forgetfulness, may God forgive thee, both in this world and in that which is to come." *The Prayer Book Interleaved, Campion and Beament*, p. 221, Rivingtons, 1866.

P. 334, l. 9.—*Riche men haden occasioun to drede not for to synne.*

"Ut pauperes possent de remissione sui peccati quo ad dominum desperare, et divites possent blasfeme credere quod ab omni peccato suo per impositionem manuum antichristi possent sine dolore quem deus instituit liberari."—Tract on Matt. xxiii. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 71).

P. 334, l. 4 from bottom.—*Qwenes, duchesses and oþer ladies han confessours.*

So in the Tract on Matthew xxiii.: "Ista autem verba hiis novis sectis pertinenter poterunt applicari, cum sint duces dominorum et dominarum, episcoporum et multorum magnatum" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 78.)

P. 341, l. 10.—*And þus þre reisyngis, etc.*

This allegorical interpretation of Christ's three miracles of raising the dead to life is taken from the Fathers. See Trench on the Miracles, p. 427. He gives a quotation from Donne, which illustrates the passage very well: "If I be dead within doors (if I have sinned in my heart), why *suscitavit in domo*, Christ gave a resurrection to the ruler's daughter within doors, in the house. If I be dead in the gate (if I have sinned in the gates of my soul), in my eyes or ears or hands, in actual sins, why *suscitavit in porta*, Christ gave a resurrection to the young man at the gate of Nain. If I be dead in the grave (in customary and habitual sins), why *suscitavit in sepulcro*, Christ gave a resurrection to Lazarus in the grave too."

P. 343, l. 10.—*And þus freris myȝten telle þe puple, etc.*

“Et sic posset proterviens totum sensum Scripturæ subvertere, negando sensum literalem et fingendo sensum figurativum ad libitum.”—De Veritate Scripturæ, c. 2 (quoted by Lechler, i. 486).

P. 344, l. 27.—*Worde þat crist bad to hise apostlis whenne he had qwickened lazar.*

“Christus eciam in persona propria suscitavit lazarum de sepulcro, et mandavit postmodum suis apostolis solvere ipsum ab institis quibus sensibiliter est ligatus, ac si vellet dicere in figura: deus est qui tollit peccata mundi, sed suis fidelibus concedit postmodum potestatem ad dimissionem illum populo declarandum.”—Tract on Matthew xxiii. c. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 706).

P. 347, l. 1.—The words “opera sine fide” are an addition either of preacher or scribe. “3°” is a mistake, the verse being James ii. 26.

P. 348, l. 21.—*But in þre maneres may mennus feiþ fayle.*

“Sed hec fides deficit in nobis hodie tripliciter. Primo, scutum fidei omnino vel secundum plurimum in multis abest, ut patet de infidelibus extra Christianismum, et illi sunt omnino accensi jaculis hostium. Secundi vero licet habeant magnam partem istius scuti cum habent multa foramina defectus fidei . . . Tercii vero sunt hii qui, licet habeant scutum fidei integrum tamen nimis remissum vel tenue.”—Early Sermons, No. 6, MS. Lambeth.

P. 349, l. 2 from bottom.—*For feiþ is of thingus . . . of good þinge in þe blis of heuen.*

“Spes vero ut distinguitur contra fidem respicit bona speranti futura. Fides vero est de preteritis, presentibus, et futuris, tam bonis quam malis, pertinentibus et impertinentibus.”—Early Sermons, III. Lambeth MS. (part i. No. 25 in T.C.C. MS.).

P. 350, l. 13.—*Neþer we witen ne we trowe now to be savyd.*

“Proposito mihi si salvabor nec concedo nec nego nec dubito, sed spero.”—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 12 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 1136). Wyclif always emphatically denies the possibility of assurance. In his tract “De Blasphemia,” he says, “If þo pope asked me wheþer I were ordeyned to be saved, or predestinate, I wolde sey þat I hoped so, but I wolde not swere hit, ne ferme hit wiþouten condicioun, þof he grettly punyscht me; ne denye hit, ne doute hit wolde I no wey” (S.E.W. III. 426). See introduction, p. xxxvi.

P. 357, l. 10.—*But it is nouȝt or accident worse þan ony breed.*

This is one of Wyclif’s favourite objections to Transubstantiation. The substance of bread was gone, but the accidents remained and without substance; for the friars would not allow that the whiteness, roundness, etc., of the host were accidents of Christ’s body. Consequently the consecrated host was a mere nothing; accidents with no underlying substance, and so inferior to a straw which had a substantial existence. So in the tract on Matthew xxiv. he says, “Papa dicitur dogmatizare quod illa hostia consecrata nec est panis nec corpus Christi, sed unum incognitum infinitum minus bonum quam hostia non sacrata” (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 58).

P. 362, l. 15.—*þis state or power is þe viear of þe god-heede.*

“Secunda pars mee militantis ecclesie forent domini temporales, qui debent esse vicarii deitatis. Ideo sepe meminit augustinus quomodo rex est vicarius deitatis.”—*Dialogus*, chap. i. (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 97).

P. 363, l. 12.—*þis state in þe chirche is þe vicar of þe manhede of criste.*

“Unde Augustinus sepe asserit quod tales domini sunt vicarii deitatis, sicut sacerdotes . . . sunt vicarii humanitatis Christi.”—*De Servitute Civili et Dominio Seculari*, cap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 83b). Compare p. 375, l. 8.

P. 368, l. 25.—*Sum of hem han saide þat þai schuld gete owte of þe seculer hondis alle the temporal lordeschip þat þai may.*”

So in the *Dialogus*, Wyclif puts into the mouth of Mendacium, “Videtur quod doceri debet e converso quod clerici auferant totum seculare dominium a brachio seculari et reservent ex integro ipsum sibi.”—(MS. Ashburnham, lf. 119.)

P. 374, l. 14.—*þe holy doctoure Odo.*

“Odo” is quoted in the Apology for the Lollards, where Dr. Todd has identified a passage as coming from the *Flores Sermonum* of Odo de Sheritona, “an English Cistercian Monk, who flourished about the year 1184, and whose sermons were published at Paris in 1520” (Dr. Todd’s note, p. 158). I should like to find this passage, as it is an early date for the mention of the voice heard at the time of the endowment, but the *Flores Sermonum* is not in the British Museum.

P. 374, l. 15.—*þe bissynes of sehipard and spiritual mornynge or weyllynge is slayne.*

In the list of names with meanings usually appended to the Vulgate we find Abel = Luctus. This applies only to Abel as the name of a city, but Odo seems not to have troubled himself with such minor distinctions. In the same list is Cain = possessio.

P. 379, line 7, et seq.—*Silvester’s sin in accepting the donation of Constantine.*

“Nam licet cesar ex sua stulticia vellet privilegium tale concedere, viri tamen apostolici foret ipsum renuere. Ideo qui nititur excusare in hoc Silvestrum vel alium a peccato nititur accusare Christum et contempnere Christi legem. . . . Supponi tamen potest quod sanctus Silvester de isto crimine postmodum penitebat.”—*De Christo et suo Adversario Antichristo* (ed. R. Buddensieg, Gotha, 1880).

P. 377, l. 2 from bottom.—*Constantyne was helid of god by graee ministred to hym bi silvestre.*

P. 379, l. 2.—*Whan he was sowzte to passion, he hidde hym sijlfe.*

The legend of Silvester tells us that Constantine was smitten with leprosy, and by counsel of the senators and heathen pontiff 3000 children were collected in order that the emperor might be cured by bathing in their blood. Constantine however refused to sacrifice so many lives for his own health. The next night Peter and Paul appeared to him and told him to send for Silvester, who was then hiding from perse-

cution in Mount Seraptis (Soracte). The purifying waters of baptism healed the Emperor of his leprosy.

P. 380, l. 3.—*As Gorram saip*.

Nicholas de Gorran, a Dominican, was a Fellow of Merton. He was confessor to Philip the Fair, of France, and died A.D. 1295. His Commentary on the Acts, the Epistles, and Apocalypse, was printed at Antwerp (1620) from a MS. in Merton College. I have looked into it, but cannot find the passage here quoted.

P. 380, l. 15.—*Soler*.

The meaning generally given to the word is "an upper room," (see Halliwell and Gloss. to W.V.), and in Joshua ii. 6 Rahab made the spies "stie up in to the soler." The word seems, however, to have been used for any living-room. In W.V. it is frequently given as an alternative to souping-room in translating *cœnaculum*, and in the account-books of King's Hall we find the fellows lodged "in solario juxta gardinum; et in solario sub eis" (Hist. Man. Com. First Report p. 84).

P. 382, l. 14.—*But whan we argue of an creature, etc.*

"Cum ex fide capimus quod nullus sanctorum, quantacunque sanctitate prepolleat, est in dicto vel consuetudine credendus, nisi de quanto illud consonat cum Christo qui est prima veritas. Et per consequens, habita a Christo vivaciori evidencia ad credendum contrarium, istud est ex illa forciori evidencia dimittendum."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, c. 16 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 102).

P. 382, l. 28.—*Gabriel schal blow his horne*.

One of the articles condemned at the Council of Constance as Wyclif's is—"Audacter prognostico omnibus istis sectis et suis complicibus, quod non defendunt fidelibus quod sacramentum sit accidens sine subjecto antequam Christus et tota triumphans ecclesia venerit equitans, in finali judicio super flatum angeli Gabrielis."—Brown's *Fasciculus*, i. 267.

P. 382, last line.—*Chefesaunce*.

Chefesaunce or chevisance seems to be the payment made for a loan. Usury was forbidden alike by ecclesiastical and common law, but capitalists would not lend without consideration. Sir John Paston's agent writes to him: "I trust that I have studyed such a mene that, upon surete as ye may make, to gete you an Cli or CC mark to be lante unto yow for an halfe yere, with oute any chevisschaunce or losse of good by yow."—Paston Letters (Gairdner), ii. 297.

In Rot. Parl. ii. 173, some merchants accused of extortion pray for inquiry lest men should be afraid to deal with the King 'en chevanches.'

Comp. Chaucer, Schipmannes Tale, 329, and Piers the Plowman (B.), v. 249, with Mr. Skeat's note.

P. 385, l. 4.—*Prisonynge and hangynge*.

The exercise of criminal jurisdiction by churchmen was felt to be a scandal, although the advantages and dignity attaching to it made it an object of ambition. Bishop Pecock ingeniously pleads that the

steward or bailiff who held the court was, for that purpose, the King's officer. "Whatever man the bischop or abbot so chesith, the King therwith and theryn committith his power to the same person so chosun, and he ouȝte not but in an vnpropre maner of speche be clepid (namelich in maters of deeth) to be stiward of the bischop or of the abbot, but of the King."—Pecock's Repressor, p. 369.

P. 387, l. 16.—*per schulde be on no wyse a nedy man and a beggere amonge hem.*

"Et omnino indigens et mendicus non erit inter vos."—Vulgate.

P. 389, l. 22.—*perfore per may noon oȝe, etc.*

"Carte, inquit, concesse de perpetua elemosyna sunt implenda. Sed idem est procuratorem diaboli sic arguere ac si intenderit, si quis iuraverit se occidere fratrem suum vel aliquod facinus pro parte diaboli contra dominum perpetrare, ex fide suo de servando iuramentum tenetur illud facinus adimplere. Et sic ratione diaboli tenetur manere perpetuo in suo crimine contra Christum."—De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum, cap. 4 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 44b).

P. 393, l. 25.—*No man berynge his knyȝthode to god.*

"Nemo militans Deo."—Vulgate.

P. 395, l. 4.—*Saynte gregori wrote to þe defensoure of rome.*

"Gregorius Romano defensore nostro Siciliæ. Perlatum ad nos est reverendissimum fratrem nostrum Basilium episcopum (of Capua) velut unum de laicis in causis sæcularibus occupari et prætoriiis deservire. [Another reading is 'velut unum de ultimis in causis occupari et prætoriiis inutiliter deservire.'] Quæ res quoniam et ipsum vilem reddit, et reverentiam sacerdotalem annihilat statim ut experientia tua hoc preceptum suscepit, eum ita ad revertendum districta exsecutione compellat, quatenus ei illic te insistente quinque diebus sub qualibet excusatione immorari non liceat ne, si quolibet modo eum ibidem moram habere permiseris, cum ipso apud nos graviter incipias esse culpabilis."—Letter, book x. 10.

P. 399, l. 13.—Parysiensis, probably Peter, "Cantor Parisiensis," whose Verbum Abbreviatum is quoted in the Apology for the Lollards, ed. by Dr. Todd for the Camden Society, p. 53. See Dr. Todd's note, p. 154.

P. 417, l. 7 from bottom.—*Sixe maner of consentis.*

"Consentit operans, defendens, consilium dans,
Ac auctorisans, non iuvans nec reprehendens."

Quoted by Lechler in a note to the De Officio Pastoralis, p. 15.

P. 428, l. 4.—*Prestis wiȝoute degre of scole may profite, etc.*

Nam inspiracio sacerdotum simplicium tam in noticia quam in operacione voluntaria plus proderit capacitati fidelium laicorum quam omnes dicte universitates cum studiis suis adjacentibus. Speculum Militantis Ecclesie, c. 26 (MS. Ashburnham, 112b).

P. 428, l. 8.—*God wole suffere noon yuel be don but ȝif good come þerof.*

"Dicunt enim fideles theologi quod deus bonus non potest aliquid

malum sinere, nisi ipsum faciat multum bonum.”—Exposition of Matt. xxiii. cap. 5 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 74).

P. 428, line 5 from bottom.—*In making of þes maystris ben pore mennus godis ofte wasted.*

For the cost of taking a Master's degree, see Mr. Anstey's preface to *Munimenta Académica*, p. xc, where the various expenses are enumerated. Among other things the new master was bound to feast all the Regents, or pay a fine of 20 marks. It is true that this was legally binding only on those who possessed a certain income, but it was often difficult for men to plead poverty. Attempts were made to restrain extravagance by statute, but probably with little effect. Wyclif speaks elsewhere of “*sumptuosas spoliaciones pauperum ad incepciones ac graduaciones*” (Ashburnham, lf. 75b).

P. 429, l. 5.—*Nouȝt groundiþ hem but nygromansye.*

This charge of necromancy is not to be taken too literally. In the tract *de Contrarietate duorum Dominorum* Wyclif brings the same accusation, but he explains the sense of it so carefully that it is clear that he is only indulging himself in the use of another hard name for his opponents. “*Extendendo*,” he says, “*nomen nigromancie, potest quelibet ars falsa vel non fundata in lege domini ars nigromantica bene dici. Et sic pseudo predicantes vel practizantes in lege papali, vel alia lege hominum in lege domini non fundata, possunt nigromantici vere dici, quia omnes illi discunt et practizant legem mortuam ex instinctu diaboli*” (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 43b).

P. 429, l. 7.—*þe wit of goddis lawe shulde be tauȝt in þat tunge þat is more knowun.*

“*Lingua enim, sive hebreæ, sive græcæ, sive latinæ, sive anglicæ, est quasi habitus legis domini. Et per quemcunque talem habitum ejus sententia magis vere cognoscitur a fideli, ipse est codex plus rationabiliter acceptandus.*”—*De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum*, cap. 2 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 44).

P. 429, l. 27.—*Lordis of englond han þe bible in freynsch.*

There is a curious confirmation of this statement in M. Paulin Paris's “*Catalogue of the MSS. in the Royal Library at Paris.*” The oldest complete French Bible in the Library is a fine MS. of the fourteenth century, which belonged in the fifteenth century to Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse (No. 6701). Of this book M. Paris says, “*L'écriture et le dialecte du numero dont nous nous occupons semblent indiquer qu'il fut exécuté en Angleterre.*” It is possible that Wyclif may have seen this very volume in the hands of one of his many friends at the Court. We must not omit to notice that a revised translation was undertaken by a contemporary of Wyclif, Raoul de Presles (d. 1383). He does not seem to have got beyond the Psalms. The MS. in the National Library containing this is numbered 6818².

P. 429, line 3 from bottom.—*As men seyen in þe pley of ȝork.*

Among the returns from Gilds made in 1389 is one from the Gild of the Lord's Prayer at York, from which we learn that “once on a time

a play, setting forth the goodness of the Lord's Prayer, was played in the city of York, in which play all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn and the virtues were held up to praise. This play met with so much favour that many said, 'Would that this play could be kept up in this city, for the health of souls and for the comfort of the citizens and neighbours.' In consequence a gild was formed, with the main object of keeping up the play, but combining with this some forms of mutual aid common in such societies. For the greater honour of the Lord's Prayer the Gild maintained a candle bearer of seven lights (in token of the seven supplications in the prayer), which was hung in the Minster, and lighted on Sundays and feast-days. "Also they are bound to make, and as often as need be to renew, a table shewing the whole meaning and use of the Lord's Prayer, and to keep this hanging against a pillar in the said Cathedral church near to the aforesaid candle bearer." This play must be distinguished from the great play acted by the Corpus Christi Gild at York, representing the life and passion of Christ, of which a copy still remains in the possession of the Earl of Ashburnham. This gild also represented every ten years a Creed-play, bequeathed to them by William Revetor, a chantry priest of the chapel of St. William in Ousebridge. These plays were probably later, as the Corpus Christi gild was founded in 1408. The people of York kept their love for the plays after the Reformation. In 1568 there was talk of acting the Creed-play, but it came to nothing. Again in April, 1572, the Council agreed, "my lord mayor shall send for the maistir of St. Anthony's, and he to bring with him the book of the play called the Pater Noster play." Whether the master brought it, and what was done with it, I do not know. It was something to have kept the popular favour for at least two centuries.—See *English Gilds* (E.E.T.S. No. 40), p. 137: and *York Records of the Fifteenth Century*, edited by R. Davies (London, 1843), pp. 257, 267, etc.

P. 431, l. 7.—*Specifie not þes nyne ordris, as poul doiþ in his bokis.*

The nine orders of angels, as arranged by Dionysius in an ascending scale, are Angels, Archangels, Princedoms, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. Of these, Colossians i. 16 supplies thrones, dominations, princedoms, powers; and Rom. viii. 13 angels and virtues (our A.V. has "powers" also here); 1 Thess. iv. 16 adds "archangel," but Cherubim and Seraphim are, I believe, not to be found in St. Paul's writings, or indeed in the New Testament.

P. 431, l. 8.—*Comyn þingis*, i.e. Universals. Wyclif, as a realist, held these to have actual being.

P. 434, l. 11, &c.—It may be worth while to give the corresponding passage in the Latin tract: "Et istud foret frenum rectoribus, ne lasciviant in esculentis vel quibuscunque concernentibus personam propriam deminutis elemosinis subditorum, ut est de lecesterniis, dorsariis, aulicis bancariis, pulvinaribus, et sumptuosis domorum ceteris ornamentis. Et idem iudicium de vestibis ac surrearum [I fancy

there is a misprint here for 'furrearum'] splendencia."—cap. xvi. p. 25.

P. 437, l. 7.—*þat þey shulden be moost dere," etc.*

"Non vosmet ipsos defendentes, charissimi."—Vulgate.

P. 438, l. 22.—*God axiþ not dyuysiouns ne rymes of hym þat shulde preche.*

This is not the only place in which Wyclif speaks of the friars as preaching verses. In the tract on Matthew xxiii. he says: "Fratres predicant verba ficta et poemata ripinisata."—Ashburnham, lf. 75. I do not know what is meant by 'ripinisata.' Can it be 'rabbinized,' broken up under different heads after the fashion of the rabbinical commentators? If so, it would answer to the 'dyuysiouns' in the text.

P. 442, l. 7.—*Physic or alkemonye.*

Alchemy was already in the fourteenth century discredited as being usually practised by cheats (see Chanounes Yemannes Tale, and Piers Plowman's

"Experimentz of alkenamyne þe poeple to deceyue."—B. x. 212);

but here it seems to be used in the innocent sense of chemistry. The chief students of the physical sciences were among the friars, whose credit as physicians we have seen noticed (pp. 10, 224).

P. 442, l. 6 from bottom.—*We ben not holours of goddis word.*

"Non enim sumus sicut plurimi, adulterantes verbum Dei," &c.—Vulgate.

P. 443, l. 3.—*þei wolen gedere comynly godis aftir þat þei han prechid.*

So in Exposition of Matthew xxiii. Wyclif says: "Et stulto stulcius potest ex usitata fratrum predicacione statim cognoscere quod gracia lucri colligendi a populo statim post sermonem finaliter predicarunt" (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 75).

P. 444, l. 20.—*A wickid hayward.*

A hayward was properly a man set to look after the inclosures or cultivated ground, and prevent cattle straying upon it from the common land. His business was also to prevent trespass. Such an officer, the Feldschütz or garde champêtre, still encounters trespassers on the Continent, where, as in the England of the 14th century, the fields are not hedged off. At a time when roads were mostly mere tracks, it is easy to understand that a man so employed might abuse his powers and stop travellers even where they had a right of way; and this seems to be the drift of the text. Twice elsewhere Wyclif calls prelates haywards (S.E.W. i. 104; iii. 436), but in both cases the word is used in its secondary sense of overseer. Compare Mr. Skeat's Notes to Piers the Plowman (pp. 87, 273). The duties of the hayward as a village officer seem to have been various. In Paston Letters (i. 217, Gairdner) we find the haywards making a distress and taking a plough and two horses.

P. 445, l. 5 from bottom.—*þei deprauen (curates) to þer parischens.*

See Erasmus' Colloquy, *πτωχοπλούσιοι*, where two friars ask

shelter at the house of the parish priest and are harshly refused. He gives a reason which reflects no great credit on him: "Quia si conspiceretis in ædibus meis gallinam aliquam [it is hardly necessary to remark that *gallina* here is equivalent to *focaria*. The 'chicks' need even less explanation] aut pullos gallinaceos, cras in concione traducerer apud populum. Hanc soletis referre gratiam communicati hospitii." And all the friars can say is: "Non omnes sumus istiusmodi."

P. 447, l. 23.—*Shulden lerne þe lawe of porfirie.*

So in *Triologus*, lib. ii. c. 1: "Eo quod juxta Porphirium participatione speciei pures homines sunt unus homo."

P. 449, l. 5.—*þif persouns hadden no glebe,* etc.

"Si autem curatus recipit fructum istius glebe, respuendo dominationem mundanam in animo, fidelis ministratio potest ipsum quoad deum et homines excusare. Hoc tamen videtur quod fidelis curatus cum opportunitatem habuerit debet renunciare isti dominio seculari."—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 120*b*).

P. 449, l. 27.—*As þei seyn,* etc.

"Sicut enim piscis sine aqua vita caret, ita sine monasterio monachus, ut dicit Eugenius Papa, 15. q. 1. Placuit."—Sermon of William of St. Amour (*Fasc. Rer. Exp.* ii. 43).

So in *Piers the Plowman*—

"Whenne fissches failen þe flode or þe fresche water,
þei deyen for drouthe whanne þei drie ligge;
Riȝt so, quod Gregorie, religioun roileth
Sterveth and styneketh and steleth lords almesses,
That out of couent and cloystre coveyten to libbe."

—B. x. 295.

See Mr. Skeat's note on the passage, p. 93.

P. 461, l. 26.—*God's love shown in the Great Schism.*

"Dei justicia, non sinens amplius sine dirupcione ecclesiam malignancium ita stare, facit ipsam ascefolam, ejus caput in duas partes debiles dividendo."—*Sermons*, Part IV. Ser. 20 (MS. T.C.C. 309*b*). Compare the tract *De Pontificum Romanorum Schismate*, S.E.W. iii. 242 *et seq.*, especially p. 247.

P. 462, l. 12.—*Makiþ lordis to kysse his feet where crist wayschide his postlis feet.*

"Valde diversum est a papa petere pedum oscula beatorum, et ipsum papam lintheo se precingere et lavare humiliter, ut Christus fecit, pedes per ordinem subditorum."—*Sermons*, IV. 8 (MS. T.C.C. 434*d*).

P. 462, l. 15.—*Where crist wente on his feet . . . þei seyn þis pope wole be closid in a castel,* etc.

"Christus circumivit patrias pedestre, oppressis benefaciens atque sanans. Papa residet tanquam alter cosdroe in sumptuoso palacio ex spoliatio pauperum fabricato et malefacit pauperibus."—*Exposition of Matthew xxiv. c. 3* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 57*b*)

“Quomodo ergo antichristus sic extollitur super Christum quod residens in palacio tanquam immobilis sufficit spiritualiter visitare totam terram habitabilem, mittendo dominative per modum citacionis cesarie post quemcunque sibi contrarium quem voluerit impugnare; revera ista non est regulacio Christi cum ipse incessit humiliter de loco in locum per civitates et castella predicans peditentim.”—*De Ordine Christiano*, c. 4 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 23b).

There is a rather similar passage in a tract just published by Dr. Buddensieg, *De Christo et suo Adversario Antichristo*, c. xii.

P. 468, l. 3 from bottom.—*Tellen more bi a cronycle of foly of an emperour.*

This refers, of course, to the story of the donation of Constantine.

P. 469, l. 10.—*Myraclis maad of deed men, etc.*

“Et secundum apostolum, 1 Cor. 3°: Si viator habuerit omnem fidem, ita ut montes transferat, caritatem autem non habuerit, nichil est. Multo magis ergo signa ostensa a deo sive diabolo in presencia corporis mortui non indicant quod sit sanctum. Ideo una de precipuis cautelis diaboli per quam seducit viantes est deceptio in hiis signis.”—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, cap. 16 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 105b).

P. 469, last line.—*God mut nedis be cheef lord, etc.*

“Si secundum legem humanam non valet donacio nisi habita licencia domini capitalis, patenter convincitur quod non valet aliqua talis donacio nisi prehabita dei licencia, qui est dominus dominorum.”—*De Contrarietate duorum Dominorum* (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 45).

P. 471, l. 1.—*For þis name is newe foundun, and it bitokeniþ wundirful.*

The only suggestion I can make as to this “wonderful” interpretation is that Wyclif connected Papa with *παπὰ*.

P. 475 l. 2.—*Anticrist myzte not for shame canonyse þis emperour.*

Constantine was canonized by the Greeks, and his feast is on May 11, as mentioned by Higden in the *Polychronicon* (Lumby, vol. v, p. 142). He has never been formally canonized in the Western Church, but his name is inserted in the *Acta Sanctorum*, under May 21st, where we are told that in Britain several churches and altars were formerly dedicated to him. It is possible that there may be here some confusion between the Emperor Constantine and two kings of Scotland of that name who were canonized. The speech of Constantine to the Nicene Council referred to in line 15 is reported by Higden in the same place.

P. 475, l. 5.—*O cause why he dide þus was to hye his oune prestis.*

“Sed captato tempore seduccionis populi, diabolus movebat cesarem quod, sicut ipse excellebat alios seculares dominos, sic sacerdos suus, quem vocat romanum pontificem, debet excellere quoslibet alios sacerdotes.”—*Speculum Militantis Ecclesie*, c. 34 (MS. Ashburnham, lf. 115b).

P. 476, l. 3.—*A coorde is a good þing, etc.*

“Nam chorda est creatura bona Dei, sicut et collum hominis, et

tamen modus habendi illam circa collum hominis strangulati est satis odibilis.”—Trial. lib. iv. c. 17, p. 306.

P. 477, l. 17.—*Our bileue techiþ vs þat a man doiþ no lengere merit, etc.*

“Videtur autem mihi quod securissimum foret hominem pro tempore quo viat juste vivere, et non in suffragio executorum vel aliorum oratorum pro suis temporalibus nimis confidere.”—Sermons, IV. 2 (MS. T.C.C. lf. 292*d*).

P. 482, l. 7.—*þif þe pope, for bidding of a kyng, grauntiþ so large indulgensis, etc.*

So in the De Sermone Domini in Monte (chap. 12), “Dicitur quendam papam fecisse oracionem quamdam et concessisse ad instanciam regis francie duo milia annorum, quocienscunque habilis ipsam dixerit inter consecracionem et agnus dei.”—(MS. T.C.C. lf. 357*b*). Compare also S.E.W. i. 354. Dr. Todd, in a note to the Lollards’ Apology (p. 122), has shown that this refers to a bull of Boniface VIII. He quotes the prayer from a copy of “Hours of the Virgin,” in which it occurs with this rubric: “Our holy father the pope Bonifacius sextus hath graunted to all them that say deuoutly this prayer folowynge betwene the eleuacyon of our lorde et the iiij Agnus dei x. thousande years of pardon.” A similar rubric from another edition says 2000 years. An allusion to this prayer and indulgence is to be found also on p. 82.

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 Balam, Balaam, 378.
 Balyes, bellies, 315.
 Ball, John, xxviii., 226.
 Bancurs, tapestries or cloths to cover Benches, 434. *See* Duncange, *s.v.* Bancale.
 Baner, beren þe, are the foremost, 130.
 Bangor, Bishop of, ix.
 Baptist, 297, 321.
 Bareyne, barren, 171.
 Basile, 395.
 Batailis, armies, 100.
 Becase, by chance, 337.
 Bede, 57, 105 ; seynt bede, 118, 506.
 Bedele, herald, crier, 58, 189.
 Bedyng, 167. *See* note.
 Bedrede, bedridden, 7 ; bedered, 186 ; beddrede, 211.
 Beds censed, 325.
 Bedun, bidden, 410.
 Beelzebub, 312 ; belsebub, 456.
 Beerd, in here = to their face, 297.
 Bearded sterre, comet, 308.
 Beastliche, sensual, 304 (*animalis*, Vulg.).

- Begging, forbidden by Christ, 352.
 Beheyȝt, promised, 331.
 Belialis carte, 260.
 Benebred, bread made of beans for the use of horses, 61, 499.
 Benefactorum, a prayer, 134, 509.
 Benefices, kindnesses, favours, 167.
 Benet (St. Benedict), 51, 120, 301.
 Beren heuy, are aggrieved, 296.
 Beren on, put upon, accuse, 11.
 Beren on honde, pretend, 214.
 Beriynge, burying, 9.
 Bernard, St., xlv, 51, 61, 104, 125, 132, 149, 167, 301, 383, 398, 504.
 Berton, William, Chancellor of Oxford, xxv, xxvi.
 Besi, busy, 8.
 Beste, beast, 58.
 Besumms, brooms, 468.
 Bete stretis, lounge about, 152, 166, 511.
 Beten marketis, lounge or hang about at markets, 172, 511.
 Betynge of pauement, lounging, 168.
 Bi, be, 101.
 Bible, should be studied, 145, 194, 235; should be taken literally, 266, 343; should be translated into English, 159, 429, 530.
 Bible, has been translated into French, 429, 530.
 Bicliptide, embraced, 462.
 Bie, buy, 13; biere, buyer, 233.
 Biforn, before, 22.
 Biggen, buy, 58; byȝe, 334.
 Biheste, promise, 11; command, 163.
 Bihete, *v.* promise, 455; bihetip, 40; byhotep, 368; *perf.* beheȝten, 16; bihiȝt, 41; bihetynges, 20.
 Bikenes, outward signs or gestures (?), 471.
 Bileue, belief, 19.
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 Birie, bury, 212.
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 Bischopricke, diocese, 43.
 Bisiden, at (bisiden rome), 51.
 Bisien, *v.* busy, 94; bisen, 150.
 Bitake, *inf.* commit, give, 146; *part.* bitokene, 243; bytake, 365; bytaken, 374.
 Bitydden, *perf.* happened, 377.
 Blaberen, talk idly, 73, 168, 274, 289.
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 Blasphemes, blasphemers, 7; blasphemye, blasphemous, 158.
 Blastis blowing (probably refers to the organs), 77.
 Blaunchid, whitewashed, 299.
 Blely, blithely, 417.
 Blent, blinded, 77; blend, 144.
 Bleren þe eyen, impose upon, 316 (Yet schal I blere here ye.—Reeve's Tale, 29).
 Blickid, stained, 218.
 Bobbe, mock, 291.
 Boden, bidden, 343.
 Boffetynge, buffeting, 291.
 Bok, a book, often used as 'a pattern,' 61, 92, 268, 408, etc.
 Boldynge, encouragement, 215.
 Bolnep, swells, 354.
 Bone, boon, 262.
 Bonere, good-natured, 229.
 Books monopolized by the religious orders, 49, 128, 221, 508.

- Boot, boat, 411.
 Boote, avail, 308.
 Borde, table, 46.
 Boren, carried, 229 ; borun, 420.
 Boris, booris, boars, 425.
 Borwyng, borrowing, 277.
 Bosardis, buzzards, 157.
 Bourding, jesting, 446.
 Bourdis, jests, 446.
 Bradwardine, iii.
 Bregynge, breaking, 74.
 Brenne, burn, 88 ; brennynge, 16 ;
 brent, 246.
 Breuyaries, abridged psalters, 41,
 427.
 Bribouris, bribers, probably the
 agents or Rome-runners men-
 tioned on p. 23 (*see* note, p.
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 Bridelochis, wedding garment, 351.
 Briddis, birds, 21.
 Bridles, decorated, 149.
 Brondis, brands, 170.
 Broþelis, scamps, 214.
 Bulls, papal, 23, 66, 82, 479.
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 492, 516, 518.
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 259, 260.
 Bury St. Edmunds, gateway at,
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 Buschementis, ambushes, 421.

 Caas, case, in caas=perchance, 7 ;
 cas, 10 ; *pl.* caassis, 412 ; caice,
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 Cayphas bischops, 72.
 Cameile, camel, 100 ; camaile, 172.
 Can, knows, 95.
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 denship of, iv.
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 481 ; meaning of the name, 472.
 Careyne, carcase, 123, 212.
 Cast, device, 84.
 Casteþ, overthrows, 127.
 Casten, devise, plot, 91.
 Castles built by religious orders,
 5, 321.
 Catel, chattel, goods, 11.
 Cauyllacions, cavils, 154 ; caue-
 lacions, 182.
 Caumbridge, Cambridge (univer-
 sity), 427.
 Cautel, trick, wile, 38.
 Ceesen of, leave off, 4.
 Celibacy of priests, a cause of
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 child murder, 100.
 Certeyn, certainty, 134.
 Certis, certainly, 9 ; certes, 25.
 Chaar, car, 259.
 Chacchiþ, impels (catches or
 chases), 293, 431.
 Chaffare, *v.* bargain, 23 ; chaf-
 farynge, 23.
 Chayer, seat, 437.
 Chalengen, accuse, 44 ; claim, 84 ;
 chalengiþ, 478.
 Chalis, chalices, 69.
 Chanons, canons, 68.
 Chanting. *See* Song, New.
 Chantry foundations, 177, 513.
 Chapels, private, parish priests
 employed in, 65.
 Chaperon, hood, 40.
 Chapitre, chapter, 43, 146, 156,
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 Charchid, charged, 393.
 Chargen, lay stress on, 7 ; chargiþ,
 67 ; *part.* chargid, 74.
 Chargis, burdens, 31.
 Charious, burdensome, 193, 470 ;
 chargious, 455.

- Charite, charter (Magna Carta), 287.
- Charity, sixteen conditions of, 220, 353, 517.
- Charter, the Great, 287.
- Chaucer, 1, 490.
- Chees, chess, 152, 168, 259.
- Chees, chose, 189.
- Chefesaunce, interest or consideration for a loan, 382, 528.
- Chepynge, market, 280.
- Cherlis, serfs, 205.
- Chese, cheese, 304.
- Chesen, choose, 7, 32; *perf.* cheseden, 413; chees, 25; chesynge, 43.
- Cheseris, choosers, 450.
- Chesoun, occasion, cause, 299, 430.
- Cheuenteynes, chieftains, 150.
- Cheueren, shiver, 14.
- Chiff, chief, 172.
- Chiden, quarrel, 152; chidyng, 152.
- Chif werk, masterpiece, 16.
- Children enticed into religious orders, 9, 10, 12, 51, 68, 133, 223, 235, 269, 278, 500.
- Child murder, to hide incontinence, 100.
- Chirchezdis, churchyards, charges for consecrating, 97, 233.
- Chirischen, cherish, 38.
- Choristers, their bad ways, 192.
- Chouchen, lie (couch), 168.
- Christ, the first reason of all things, 425; lord of all things, 423, 448; king and priest, 471; would not be made an earthly king, 195, 371, 376; paid tribute to the Emperor, 86, 139, 456.
- Christ, the only model to be safely followed, 382, 451; his example a command, 377.
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- Church, false notion of what it is, 78, 256, 258; consists only of the predestinate, 78, 198, 501, 515.
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- Civil obedience insisted on by Wyclif, xxxvii, 229, 519.
- Cyuylyte, civil rule, 385.
- Clamengis, Nicolas de, xxxixn., 509.
- Clamouse, clamorous, 105; clamose, 269; clamours, 27.
- Clement VI., xxxiii.
- Clement VII. (Antipope) xv, xlviii.
- Clene, *adj.* pure, 51; clenest, 276.
- Clene, *adv.* entirely, 100; clenly, 146.
- Clenese, cleanse, 312, 323.
- Clepen, call, 27; clepiþ, 21; *perf.* clepede, 2; *part.* clepyd, 6.
- Clergye, learning, 128.
- Clergy employed in lords' houses, 13, 65, 168, 242, 246, 333, 449; are architects, 213, 246.
- Clergy, hold serfs and execute justice like laymen, 385; fight in person, 383; claim exemption from lay judgment, 158, 289, 291.
- Clergy, their extravagance in horses, 149, 434, 510.
- Clergy, lay correction of, 240, 289, 520; authorized by the law of England, 292.
- Clergy, state of, represents Christ's manhood, 363.

- Clerkis, learned men, 4.
 Clier, clear, 208.
 Clipping, embracing, 218.
 Cloþ, clothes, 13; cloiþ, 151; cloþis of gold, 88.
 Clothes given as presents, 129, 210.
 Cloute, *v.* patch, 41.
 Coffris, coffers (almes of coffris), 12, 493.
 Colage, college, 385; colage of Christ=the apostles, 366.
 Colour, pretence, excuse, 10, 88.
 Comelyngis, strangers (translates *advenæ*), 42, 46, 217.
 Comendacion, *commendatio animarum*, one of the services for the dead (Sarum Breviary, ii. 282), 191.
 Comets, a sign of pestilence, 308.
 Comineris, commoners, 88.
 Comynste, community, 9; comunte, 49; comynalte, 110; comunete, 125.
 Commandments, The Ten, broken by the Religious, 7.
 Community of goods among monks and friars a sham, 384.
 Compayne, company, 22; lord of compaynes=lord of hosts, 58.
 Complexion, constitution, temperament, 10, 38, 170.
 Comunen, communicate, hold communion, 19; comyne, 357.
 Comounynge, holding in common, 385.
 Comounte, commonalty, commons, 278; comonte, 363.
 Concel, counsel, 315.
 Concubines kept by bishops, 73.
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 Confessors, private, 65, 248, 325, 334, 525.
 Confessors, false, 65, 181, 186, 237, 242, 247, 277.
 Conforten, encourage, 176; *part.* conforted, 100.
 Congregacion, society, order, 9.
 Coniected, devised, 255.
 Conne, know, 143; connyng, knowledge, 4.
 Conqueren, acquire, 183.
 Consecration of churches, altars, etc., a means of extortion, 35, 62, 69, 97, 214, 233, 277, 393.
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 Constorie, consistory (courts), 95, 156; consistorie, 184, 514.
 Contekis, quarrels, 232, 234.
 Contemplation no excuse for not preaching, 113, 188.
 Contemplative life, 188, et sq., 514.
 Contynce, continence, 40.
 Contynen, continue, 33; *part.* contyned, 93.
 Continence, vows of, brought in by the devil, 100.
 Contradicions, traditions, 7. The word is very likely used to imply that the traditions contradict God's law.
 Contrarien, oppose, 56, 409.
 Contrarius, contrary, 380; contrariouſly, 85.
 Contrition, what it is, 339.

- Convents, splendour of, 5, 27, 49, 321, 448, 490.
 Conventycles, societies, 366.
 Coolding, cooling, 487.
 Cope, covering (cope of heuene), 318, 478; a monk's frock, 128.
 Corieris, curriers, 471.
 Coryouste, curiosity, 8; daintiness, 200.
 Cornely, Cornelius, 471.
 Corpus Christi Gild at York, 531.
 Corseris, coursers, horses, 88; horsedealers, 172.
 Corsica claimed as subject to the Pope, xxxiii.
 Cosdroe, Chosroes, pope likened to, 533.
 Cosyns, cousins (Christ's), 353.
 Cost, expenditure, 88.
 Coste, spend, costiþ, 174; *part.* costid, 157.
 Costelewe, costly, 121, 129, 205.
 Costy, expensive, 76.
 Cotidian distribucion, 62. *See* note, 500.
 Cotumax, contumacious, 184.
 Couche, lie, dwell, 30, 60.
 Couden, could, 81.
 Coueitise, covetousness, 2.
 Couenable, suitable, 217; couenabliche, 314.
 Couent, convent, 127.
 Couere, the ark, 55.
 Council of 1382, xxxvi, 495.
 Countre note, harmony, 77.
 Countyngge, keeping accounts, 65.
 Coupable, culpable, 312.
 Coupabilnesse, guiltiness, 335.
 Courtenay, Bishop of London, x; Archbishop of Canterbury, xxvii.
 Courtesy, decay of, 205.
 Courtesy of God, 284, 291, 340.
 Cowntervaylen, *v.* equal in value, 392.
 Craft, business, 73.
 Credence, credit, 255.
 Crem, chrism, the consecrated oil used in baptism, 69, 500.
 Cristene, baptize, 112.
 Cristendom, Christianity, 102.
 Cristismasse games, 206.
 Croceris, crosiers, 210.
 Crois, cross, 45.
 Croke, turn, 230.
 Crokid, deformed, 27.
 Cropsen, crept, *part.* 296.
 Croune, the tonsure, 125.
 Cruelliere, more cruelly, 98.
 Crusade in Flanders, xxxi, 8, 52, 141, 152, 263, 491, 511.
 Cuþshens, cushions, 434.
 Cuylid, *part.* collected, 433.
 Cumberworth, Sir Thomas, extract from his will, 516.
 Curate, use of the word, 509.
 Curates are bound to reside, 453; how they should be appointed, 450; take office in lords' houses, 149, 161; absent themselves under pretence of study, 156.
 Curates, drunken, 152; ignorant, 153, 167, 455; extravagant in dress, 148; given to hunting and hawking, 151, 434; give to their kinsfolk what should go to the poor, 439.
 Cure, care, 32, 42.
 Curteys, courteous, 284.
 Cusees wif, 414.
 Custode, warden (of the Franciscan Order), 42, 47.
 Custodries, wardenships, districts over which the wardens had charge, 43.
 Custumable, habitual, 174; custumabliche, 183.
 Dailes, without judgment or redress, 92, 128. *See* note, 503.
 Damiani, Peter, 509.
 Damyselis, damsels, 9.
 Dampneþ, condemns, 67.

- Dancing, helps men to preferment, 65, 246.
 Dancing, leads to late hours, 204; sometimes allowable, 206.
 Danyel, 15, 75.
 Dante, xxxix.
 Daudid, 231, 365; daviþ, 291.
 Deacons, appointed by the apostles, 413.
 Debatis, quarrels, 59.
 Debts, rich men delay payment of unjustly, 25.
 Debts, distinguished from alms (or tithes), 423.
 Debt, imprisonment for, 200, 211, 214; incurred through drunkenness, 217.
 Decknys, deacons, 364.
 Dede, dead, 5, 23.
 Dede, deed, 6, 70.
 Dedis of apostlis, the Acts, 195, 383.
 Deel, *subs.* share.
 Defaute, defect, 4.
 Defendid, forbidden, 17.
 Defensoure of Rome : defensor civitatis was the title of a magistrate whose chief duty was to afford protection against oppression on the part of the governor; he had a subordinate civil jurisdiction, 395.
 Defoulid, trodden down (cf. W. V., Luke x. 19 : "power of defoulinge othir tredinge on serpentis"), 18.
 Defourmed, ill made, 349.
 Degeneracy of mankind, 38, 93.
 Degrees, university, of doubtful advantage, 428, 529.
 Degrees, expense of taking, 428, 530.
 Deisese, discomfort, 179.
 Deyitte, ? dignity (perhaps daintiness), 211.
 Deynte, dignity, 220.
 Delices, pleasures, 124.
 Delih, distributes, 161; delynge, 134; delid, 181.
 Deme, *v.* judge, 84; *perf.* demeden, 231; dempten, 393; *part.* demyd, 33.
 Denes, deans (rural), 249.
 Departe, separate, 199; departing, distributing, 81.
 Depnesse, depth, 62.
 Deprauen, slander, speak ill of, 445; depraveden, 312; deprauynge, 168.
 Derrere, dearer, 6.
 Derne, secret, 353.
 Derworþi, dear, 98.
 Deschaunt, descant, 77, 91, 191, 501.
 Despair, the sin against the Holy Ghost, 351.
 Devoyde, remove ("But for a short time myself I devoyde." — Coventry Mysteries, 243), 182.
 Dichis, ditches, 420.
 Dictis, Dicta, a book by Grossetête, 385.
 Diffiede, distrusted, 479.
 Diþschis, dishes, 434.
 Diþt, prepared, 340.
 Dilauy, lavish, 306. The word occurs in S.E.W. iii. 388, and we find also delaunynesse, ii. 298, and in both cases it bears this meaning. I can find no other example of it.
 Dymes, tithes, 57.
 Dirige, mattins in the office for the dead, 15, 177, 191, 212, 494, 517.
 Disceisen, discomfort, 11.
 Disceit, deceit, 61; disseyt, 461.
 Dysceyuen, deceive, 4.
 Discess, departure, 299.
 Dischargih, relieves, 47.
 Disclaundren, slander, 138.
 Disgratid, degraded, 246.
 Dispeir, despair, 15.
 Dispende, spend, 433.

- Dispensations, from rule of friars, 182, 223.
 Dispensis, expenditure, 321.
 Dispit, spite, 35 ; contempt, 17.
 Dispitusly, pitilessly, 160.
 Disport, playground, 322.
 Dissert, desert, deserving, 351.
 Dissese, discomfort, 61 ; deisese, 179.
 Distresse (legal), 214 ; used harshly, 234.
 Distruze, destroy, 340.
 Disturbances, charged on poor priests, xxvi, 27, 138.
 Disturblyn, disturb, 285 ; disturburble, 257 ; disturbleden, 27 ; *part.* disturblid, 43 ; disturbl-ynge, 43.
 Disusen, misuse, 440.
 Divinity Schools, false doctrines upheld in, 265.
 Dyuors, divorce, 20, 176, 185.
 Docke, cut away, 430.
 Dolium, a prison in London, 496.
 Dom, judgment, 16.
 Domesman, judge, 32.
 Dominic, St., 301.
 Dominion, doctrine of, learned from Fitz-ralph, iii ; its origin and growth, xxxiii, xxxiv ; its value to Wyclif, xxxv.
 Dominion, all held of God, 24, 26, 244, 247, 284, 373, 423, 470.
 Dominion, belongs to laymen, 117, 276, 373, 391, 451.
 Domnpnesse, damnableness, 126.
 Don of, take off, 348.
 Doomsday, fifteen tokens before, 19, 494.
 Doren, dare, 36 ; dorn, 73.
 Doseris, hangings for the walls, so called because they came at the back of the people sitting, 434.
 Doseyns, dozens (of jurors), 182.
 Doump, dumb, 420.
 Dowe, endow, 284 ; *part.* dowid, 124 ; dowing, 445.
 Dreynt, drowned, 62, 444.
 Dreng, drag, 473.
 Dress, clerical extravagance in, 60, 92, 121, 148.
 Dryncching, drowning, 59.
 Drit, filth, 22.
 Dronkelewe, drunken, given to drink, 193, 217.
 Droof, drove, 241.
 Drowyn, drew, 105.
 Drunken men see double, 267.
 Drunkenness, in priests, 152, 168, 193 ; brings men to poverty, 217.
 Druste, durst, 149.
 Dwe, due, 17.
 Dukes, leaders, generals, 63.
 Durren, dare, *pres. ind.* 251.
 Ebreu, Hebrew, 430.
 Ecclesiastical courts, procedure in, 74, 156, 500 ; abuses of, 184, 251.
 Echone, each one, 475.
 Eddris, adders, 315.
 Eelde, old age, 411 ; elde, 173.
 Eeris, ears, 345.
 Eft, again, 339, 354, 363.
 Egipt, 440.
 Eȝte, eighth, 220.
 Eien, eyes, 281 ; eiȝen, 99.
 Eyris, heirs, 476.
 Eise, ease, 134.
 Eke, also, 57.
 Eldris, parents, 49 ; ancestors, 439.
 Ely, Eli, 55 ; hely, 314.
 Elizebeth, 204.
 Ellis, else, 15.
 Emperor, The, 362, 386.
 Emperours bischop, 467.
 Emperours clerkis, 79, 446, 447.
 Emperour prelates, 444, 479, 480.
 Empire, rivalry of, with the Papacy, xxxiii.
 Encenseris, censers, 323.
 Enchesouns, reasons, 315.

- Encombre, to set fast, as in the mire, 70.
 Encresceþ, increases, 155.
 Endeles, infinitely, 71.
 Endityng, indicting, prosecuting, 16.
 Endowment, of the church is wrong, xxvi, 122, 284, 385, 388, 445, 476; voice heard at, 122, 374, 380, 506.
 Endowments, impoverish lords, 97, 285, 369; should be restored to the laity, 389.
 Endurid, hardened, 25.
 Enfamynen, starve, 150.
 Enfect, infected, 379.
 Enforce, strengthen, 111.
 Enforsid, urged, pressed, 378.
 Englund, engeland, 22, 276.
 Enhaunsen, exalt, 75.
 Enleuene, eleven, 482.
 Enoc, Enoch, 308.
 Enpeyringe, injury, 389.
 Enproprid, appropriated, 81.
 Enpugne, impugn, 391; enpugnyd, 369.
 Enqueren, inquire for, seek after, 130; enquyred, 279.
 Ensaumplerie, example, 230.
 Ensaumplid, exemplid, 119.
 Ensuren, assure, 17.
 Entails, 391.
 Enterdite, put under an interdict, 63; *part.* entirdited, 79; enterditynge, 79.
 Entirmete, meddle, 394; entirmeten of, 159.
 Entre, entry, 94.
 Entre, entire, 106; enteire, 107.
 Entrike, entangle, 393.
 Enuenymen, poison, 92.
 Enyoie 3e, *refl.* rejoice, 243.
 Enyonye, enjoin, 43; enyoyned, 49.
 Ephesyns, 232.
 Ere, ear, 328; eris, 8; erris, 117.
 Erryng, wandering (stars), 308.
 Erchedekene, archdeacon, 455, 456.
 Es, is, 82.
 Esen, *v.* ease, 30.
 Esi, easy, 2.
 Esseis, Essenes, 2.
 Eue, Eve, 207, 392, 428, 461.
 Euele, *adv.* ill, 57.
 Euen, just, 394.
 Evil always a source of good, 428, 529.
 Ewgeny, Eugenius III., 383.
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 Excommunication has no effect on the body, 75, 501.
 Excommunication for not paying tithes, 146, 151, 233, 453, 510.
 Excommunication a cause of imprisonment, 36, 74, 95, 277, 496, 505.
 Excommunication, letters of, 35, 250.
 Exemption from jurisdiction of the bishops, 224, 247; from lay jurisdiction, 277.
 Experimental science practised by friars, 8, 442, 491, 532.
 Expounen, expound, 84.
 Ezechiel, 395.
 Faat, fat, 6.
 Fables told to support the orders, 153, 310.
 Fables preached, 16, 50, 59, 73, 105, 153, 175.
 Face, appearance, 84, 158.
 Fagyngis, flatteries, 307.
 Failleden, failed, 109.
 Faith, what it is, 261, 347.
 Fallas, fallacy, 425.
 Falsed, falsehood, 260.
 Falsen, give the lie to, 352.
 Famularite, familiarity, 44.
 Famulorum, a prayer, 134, 195, 509.

- Fantom, vanity, 186; fantym, 321.
 And worlisshe riches how swa þai come,
 I hald noȝht elles bot filth and fantome.
 —Pricke of Conscience, 1196; *see*
 Dr. Morris's note on the word.
 Faren, go on, act, 96, 138.
 Faste, busily, steadily, 6, 15.
 Fauȝty, faulty, 387; fawty, 364.
 Fawte, default, 388.
 Fautouris, abettors, 69.
 Febliþ, weakens, 454.
 Feen, mire, 62.
 Feiris, fairs, 280.
 Fel, fierce, 476; *adv.* felly, 456.
 Feld, field, 10.
 Felde, fell, 477.
 Fend, fiend, devil, 9.
 Fendliche, devilish, 304.
 Fer, far, 10; ferre, 31; *comp.*
 ferrer, 381.
 Fercastyng, scheming, crafty,
 256.
 Feren, frighten, 79.
 Ferforþli, far, 391.
 Ferme, farm, 243.
 Ferþe, fourth, 111; firþe, 220.
 Festis, feasts, 23.
 Feþ, faith, 79.
 Ficchid, fixed, 307.
 Fier, fire, 78.
 Fiftenþes, taxes, 66. *See* note,
 500.
 Figuren, transfigure, 288.
 Fiȝs, fish, 449.
 Fille, fulfil, satisfy, 217.
 Fynde, provide for, 151, 176;
 fyndynge, 116.
 Fynden vp, invent, 199.
 Fyndyngis, inventions, 77; fyn-
 dyng vp, 77.
 Fynees, Phinehas, contrasted with
 Constantine, 475.
 First fruits, 245, 277, 393, 451.
 Fisege, visage, 307.
 Fisik, medicine, knowledge of
 abused by friars, 10, 224.
 Fittrid, 60. *See* note, p. 499.
 Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh,
 iii, xxxiii, xliii, xlvn., 128,
 507, 518.
 Flaundris, Flanders, 152. *See*
 Crusade.
 Flen, flee, 34; *perf.* fley, 195;
part. fleed, 173; fleynge, 218.
 Fleys, flesh, 411, 435.
 Fleysly, fleshly, sensual, 474.
 Floriȝshid, ornate, flowery, 445.
 Flowen, fled, 71.
 Fode, food, 150.
 Folde, bow, bend aside, 288, 426.
 Fole, fool, 10.
 Fool, foolish, 118; folie, 7; foly,
 163.
 Folily, foolishly, 290; folyliche,
 320.
 Fonnyd, foolish, 20; insipid, 57,
 499.
 Fonnydnesse, foolishness, 266.
 Forbarre, hinder, 61; forbaren,
 234; forbarien, 182.
 Forbeden, forbid, 59; *perf.* for-
 beed, 287; *part.* forbodun, 376.
 Fordo, destroy, 38; fordope, 345;
 fordiden, 314.
 Fordon, done before, 339.
 Forfenden, forbid, 303.
 Forfeture, loss, 348.
 Forȝeue, abandon, give up, 200;
 (forȝeuyng manasse, 232; trans-
 lates the Vulg. "remittentes
 minas," Eph. vi. 9).
 Forgoer, leader, 383; translates
 the Vulg. "præcessor"; for-
 goeris, forerunners, 128.
 Forrouris, furs, 12.
 Forswere, perjure, 63; forsworn,
 75; forsweryng, 253.
 Forþ, may not forþ, cannot go on,
 155, 222; usen forþ, continue
 to use, 248.
 Forþinke, repent, 235; forþink-
 yng, 338.
 Forwhi, because, 44.
 Foule, foully, 9.

- Foundement, foundation, 260.
 Franchisen togydir, are under the same (private) jurisdiction, 385.
 Francis, St., Testament of, 45, 497.
 Franciscans evade their rule, 49, 498; say they are released by the Pope, 47.
 Fraternity, letters of, 4, 5, 12, 27, 160, 262.
 Fraticelli, 219; persecuted by other friars, 12, 51.
 Fraunse, France, 429.
 Fraunseis, St. Francis, 40; fraunciss, 301.
 Freedom of God's law, or the Gospel, 17, 31, 67, 253, 256, 299, 330.
 Freelte, frailty, 344.
 Freewill, 108, 110.
 Freliche, freely, 4.
 French Bible, 429.
 Frere, friar, 40.
 Friars, Wyclif's opposition to, xliii; preach for gain, 442, 445; evade their rule 47, etc.; errors about the Host, 19, 349, 352.
 Friars hear confession, xlv, 9, 27, 181, 224, 492, 518, 525; slander parish priests, 445, 532; waste money in adorning their churches, 8, 181, 321.
 Friars, unchaste, 6, 10, 12, 224, 305, 309, 490.
 Friars practise as physicians, 10, 219, 224, 492.
 Friars send money out of the realm to the King's enemies, 50; build extravagantly, 5, 27, 50, 316, 490; steal children, 9, 10, 51, 68, 133, 223, 269, 278.
 Friars, character of their preaching, 8, 16, 105, 444; some good, 298.
 Friars' habits, sanctity attributed to, 316, 523.
 Friste, first, 245.
 Fryste fruytis, firstfruits, 66.
 Froytis, fruits, 66.
 Fulbut, headstrong, 213.
 Fulle, at þe, sufficiently, 55.
 Fullire, headlong (the Dublin MS. has fulbere), 256.
 Furniture, expensive, used by priests, 6, 434, 531.
 Furroures, furs, 434.
 Gabbe, to lie, 297, 331; gabben, *ind.* 290; gabbynge, 207.
 Gabbyngis, lies, 305, 442.
 Gabriel, 382, 528.
 Gadlyngis, slanderers, 214.
 Gamelyn, 513.
 Gamenes, games, 246.
 Garlek, for goose-stuffing, 82.
 Garnement, garment, 50, 302.
 Gaten, got, *perf.* 73.
 Gateways, embattled, to abbeys, 15, 494.
 Gatis, ways, 191.
 Gaunt, John of, ix, x, xi, xii, xxv, xxix, xxx.
 Gederen, gedre, gather, 14, 46; gedreþ, 6; gederynge, 154; gederid, 431.
 Gederid, compound (a gedrid name), 431.
 Gendren, engender, 146; gendrid, 45.
 Gendring, used of consecrating the elements (gendring[Christ's] body), 441.
 Gendrure, begetting, 441.
 Generalte, the whole body, 43.
 Gentry, bad example set by, 207.
 George, St., 99.
 Gessen, suppose, think, 105, 192; gessedest, 67.
 Gestis, guests, 42.
 Getiþ, begets, 441.
 Gettere, boaster, 23, 243, 249; also written iettere.
 Gidre, *v.* gather, 128.
 Giesy, Gehazi, 67; giezi, 378, 380.
 Gildene mouth, translation of Chrysostom, 104.

- Gilis, deceits, 305, 323.
 Gilours, deceivers, 309.
 Gyltif, guilty, 9, 112, 272; gylti, 10.
 Gises, fashions, 186.
 Gyternynge, playing on the cittern, a sort of guitar, 9.
 Glauer, *v.* chatter, 330.
 ȝiue it vp, yield, allow oneself beaten, 296.
 Glastonbury kitchen, 494.
 Glebe, 449, 533.
 Glymerynge, indistinct perception, 339.
 Glorious, ostentatious, 162.
 Glose, commentary, 12.
 Gloseris, commentators, 284.
 Glosynge, commenting, 135, 148.
 Glotyne, gluttony, 86.
 Glutton's argument, 97, 454.
 Gnackis, tricks, 184.
 Gnare, snare, 437.
 God is a courteous lord, 284, 291, 340; he is liberal, 434.
 God, presence of, in all creatures, 203, 208, 516.
 God's law, a favourite expression of the Lollards, 254.
 Gogelen, squint, look aside, 341.
 Gold exchanged for lead (in paying for bulls), 23, 66, 245.
 Gold drained out of England to the Papal Court, 22, 66, 92, 144.
 Golet, gullet, 200.
 Gomor, Gomorrha, 26, 248.
 Good fryday, 302.
 Gorram (Nicolas de Gorran), 380, 528.
 Gospel, commentaries on, are scarce, 145.
 Gospel, authority of, 255.
 Gospelleris, authors of Gospels, 256.
 Gostli, spiritual, 90; gostly, *adv.* 56.
 Gouvernaile, governance, 24; government, 118, 239.
 Graielis, service books, graduals, 194, 515.
 Gratter, greater, 383.
 Greek form of absolution, 332, 525.
 Greese, anoint, 439; greesse, 454.
 Greesis, steps, stairs, 420.
 Gregge, aggravate, 319; greggiȝ, 286.
 Gregor þe sixte, 391.
 Gregory, St., 8, 35, 56, 58, 61, 64, 70, 77, 96, 112, 118, 188, 245, 272, 339, 377, 395, 529.
 Gregory XI., *vin.*, xiii, xiv, 405.
 Greke, a member of the Greek Church, 332, 455, 464.
 Grete, great, 2; greteste, 86.
 Grette, greeted, 204.
 Gret chep, very cheap, 185.
 Greu, Greek, 430.
 Greue, *sub.* grave, 17.
 Groos, plain, 408.
 Grosted (Robert Grossetête, Bishop of Lincoln), 61, 123, 145, 224, 507, 510, 518.
 Grucchen, to grumble, 111; grucchiȝ, 466; grucchyng, 15.
 Gruccheris, grumblers, 308.
 Guarnerius, Arnold, viii.
 ȝate housis, gate houses (expenditure on), 15, 494.
 ȝee, yea, 2; ȝe, 10; ȝhe, 297.
 ȝee, ye, 8.
 ȝeer, year, 3; ȝer, 62.
 ȝelden, yield, give, 97; ȝilding, 423.
 ȝerde, a stick, 332.
 ȝerdis, yards (chirche ȝerdis), 97, 233.
 ȝefe, to give, 181; ȝeuen, 9; ȝaf, 3; ȝauen, 118; ȝeuyng, 12; ȝeeuyng, 67; ȝouen, 40.
 ȝette, boast (?), 319.
 ȝeuere, giver, 11.
 ȝif, if, 2.
 ȝifte, gift, 66; ȝieft, 82; ȝeftis, 71.

- ʒit, yet, 4; ʒitte, 333, ʒhit, 350.
 ʒock, yoke, 354; ʒoc, 425; ʒook, 228.
 ʒonge, young, 6; *comp.* ʒongar, 383.
 ʒork, York (Archbishop of), 118; play of, 429, 530.
 ʒouwre, your, 179.
 ʒoupe, youth, 253.
- Habitis, dress of monks or friars, 12; its excessive amplitude, 315; sanctity attached to, 316.
 Hayned, persecuted, spited, 250.
 I cannot find this word anywhere else, but suppose it to be connected with Fr. *haine*.
 Hayward, a keeper of inclosures, 444, 532.
 Halde, hold, 49; haldest, 132.
 Halewid, those who are sanctified (translates sanctificatis, Vulg.), 300.
 Half, behalf, 303.
 Halidaies, holy days, 280.
 Halpeny, halfpenny, 21.
 Haltynge, lame, 231.
 Halwen, saints, 88.
 Halwid, hallowed, 41, 188.
 Halwyng, consecration, 35, 62.
 Han, have, *inf.* 15; *ind. pres.* 4; hauen, *inf.* 99.
 Hangiþ in, depends on, 266.
 Hard, of hard=hardly, 297.
 Hardy, bold, 33.
 Harim, harm, 21.
 Hasard, gambling, 152.
 Hauynge, property, 2.
 Haunten, frequent, 60; hanten, 23; practise, 73, 146, 248.
 Hauntyng, practice, 207.
 Hawen, saints, 41, 48.
 Hawynge, having, 131.
 Hawking by priests, 23, 151, 212, 246, 259, 434; by monks, 121.
 Hedly, in a headstrong way, 100; heedly, 256.
- Heele, health, 340; heelp, 297.
 Heerde, herdsman or shepherd, 321.
 Hey, high, 5; heiþe, 13; heþe, 61; *comp.* heþere, 159; *sup.* heierst, 327; hierste, 408.
 Heiþed, exalted, 225; heyhid, 307.
 Heieris, heirs, 183.
 Heyl, hail, welcome, 311.
 Heynesse, highness, 42.
 Heldris, parents, 9, 32.
 Hele, heal, 179; helid, 58; heledde, 343.
 Hely, Eli, 314.
 Hely, Elijah, 75; helise, 67; heliþe, 377; heliye, 380.
 Helynge, clothing, 97, 387.
 Helles, else, 125; hellis, 64.
 Helt, poured, 380.
 Hem, them, 2.
 Hende, end, 24; hendeles, endless, 220.
 Heoris, theirs, 300.
 Herberwen, *v.* harbour, entertain, 5; herberewe, 211; herbwre, 210; herbwerid, 129; herboringe, 413.
 Hereberwe, harbour, shelter, 14; herbwre, 146; herbore, 415.
 Herberweles, shelterless, 129.
 Here, their, 2; hern, theirs, 232; heeren, 310; heren, 328; herne, 414.
 Here, ear, 169.
 Hereris, hearers, 158.
 Herefore, therefore, 11; herfore, 13.
 Heresy, unjustly charged against true priests, 74; prevalent in schools of divinity, 265.
 Heretics' property, to whom forfeit, 502.
 Herford (Nicholas), xxvii, xxix, 141.
 Herid, haired ("þe sterre herid or beerdid" =the comet), 308.

- Herie, worship, praise, 216 ;
 heriede, 301 ; herynge, 206 ;
 part. hirid, 288.
 Heryyngis, praises, 274.
 Heris, hairs, 21.
 Herode, 273, 389 ; heroude, 101,
 297 ; his oath not binding, 389.
 Herof, for this, on account of this,
 111.
 Herre, hinge, 472.
 Hertis, hearts, 20.
 Hertly, heartily, 110.
 Herþe, earth, 86.
 Heruest trees, trees at fruit time,
 307.
 Heest, command, 79 ; hestis, 7 ;
 “ þe ten hestis ” = the Ten Com-
 mandments, 340.
 Heten, eat, 96.
 Heuyd, head, 3 ; heued, 218 ; hed,
 21.
 Hidliche, secret, 315.
 Hien, hasten, 168 ; hiȝen, 173 ;
 hiede, 195.
 Hye, exalt, 311, 475 ; hiȝen, 241 ;
 hyed, 421 ; hiȝng, 475.
 Hiȝt, promised, 348.
 Hildegard, 11, 492.
 Hilden, hold ; hilden out = exhibit,
 171.
 Hile, *v.* cover, 475.
 Hilynge, covering, 248, 411 ;
 church vestments, 223.
 Hynes, servants, 418, 439, 454.
 Höfler, Dr. Constantine, ix, xxix,
 xxxii, xlvii.
 Holde, fortress, 321.
 Holde, old, 58.
 Holde forþ, practise, continue, 3,
 11.
 Holderis up, supporters, 10.
 Holetis, dens, caves, 322.
 Hole, whole, 67, hool, 100.
 Holy, wholly, 370 ; hooliche, 42 ;
 Holy days, breaking of, 9, 120.
 Holiliche, holily, 179.
 Holid, pierced with holes, 349.
 Holiness better than knowledge,
 327.
 Holouris, whoremongers, adul-
 terers, 91, 442.
 Holsum, wholesome, 382 ; *adv.*
 hoolsumly, 393.
 Holsumness, wholesomeness, 239.
 Homly, familiar, 41, 477.
 Hondis, dogs, 12, 121.
 Honorie, Honorius III., 40.
 Hoosis, hose, 287.
 Hoot, hot, 170.
 Hope, what it is, 349, 526.
 Hordam, whoredom, 205 ; hor-
 dom, 156.
 Hord, hoarding, fence (?), 316.
 Hordis, heaps, 100 ; treasuries,
 476.
 Horden, heap up, treasure, 101,
 338 ; hoordede, 321.
 Horses, extravagance in, on the
 part of the clergy, 60, 88, 92,
 149, 210, 249, 434.
 Hospitality of bishops, 413.
 Host, doctrine of the, 19, 345,
 349, 352, 357, 465.
 Host, the worse for consecration,
 357, 526.
 Hostiense, the cardynal, the Car-
 dinal of Ostia, 47, 498.
 Houȝ, how, 388.
 Houre, our, 83.
 Housynge, dwellings, 175.
 Houslewth, shelter in a house, 211.
 Howen, ought, 241.
 Hud, hidden, 299.
 Hue, Hugh (St.), 382, 512.
 Hungary claimed by the Popes,
 xxxiii.
 Hure, her, 12.
 Hurlid, bandied about, driven,
 184, 233, 250.
 Y, I, 76.
 Iapen, *v.* jest, trick, 82 ; lark, 238 ;
 iapiȝ, 170 ; iapyng, 213.
 Iapes, jests, tricks, 12, 65.

- Iame, James (St.), 129, 211 ;
 James, 61 ; Jamus, 304 ; his
 teaching on confession, 343.
 Y-broken, broken, 391.
 Iche, each, 327.
 Ychoon, each one, all of them, 328 ;
 ychone, 345.
 Ydiots, ignorant men, 5, 46.
 Idolatry, it is, to worship an acci-
 dent, 466.
 Jacke Upland, 490, 492.
 Jaudun, John of, xxxiii.
 Iepte, Jephthah, 389.
 Ieroboam, an example of simony,
 67.
 Ierom, Jerome (St.), 31, 37, 58,
 112, 118, 122, 125, 248, 380 ;
 translated the Bible, 429.
 Jeromye, Jeremiah, 188, 231 ;
 ieromyes, 131.
 Ierusalem, 125.
 Ietteris, braggarts. *See* Getteris.
 Jews, worst governed under
 priests, 370.
 Yze, eye ; at ize=at a glance, 384.
 Ilche, each, every, 297, 310.
 Ilke, same, 9, 87, 311.
 Images, worship paid to, xlii, 7 ;
 money wasted on, 210, 279, 521.
 Ympe, offshoot, 334.
 Imprisonment for debt, 200, 211,
 214 ; for excommunication, 36,
 74, 95, 277, 496, 505.
 In, against, 296.
 Incontinence, prevalence of, 218.
 Ynde, India, 436.
 Indignacion, contempt, 4, 204.
 Induction fees, 248.
 Indulgences, 8, 82, 150, 238, 464,
 482, 491, 535.
 Innocent III., private confession
 first made binding by, 328, 524.
 I-now, enough, 327 ; ynow}, 12.
 Institution fees, 248.
 Instuyng, instituting, 450.
 Intention can be judged only by
 God, 311.
 Intil, into, 288.
 Joan (Princess) stops proceedings
 against Wyclif, xiv.
 Joas, Joash, 365.
 Iob, 354 ; served God on the
 dunghill, 15 ; called king, 231.
 Iogelours, jugglers, 99.
 Ioly, lively ; 169 ; iolily, gladly,
 100.
 Joon, Jon, John (St.) the Evange-
 list, 9, 34, 37, 195, 327.
 Joon, John (St.) Baptist, 2, 329,
 345, 467.
 John St. Chrysostom, 25, 104,
 105.
 Josias, 365.
 Ypocrisie, hypocrisy, 2.
 Ypocrite, hypocritical, 89.
 Yren, iron, 303.
 Irose, angry, 307.
 Is, his, 67.
 Ysaye, Isaiah, 25.
 Ysedore, 172 ; ysidre, 272, 374.
 Israel, 232 ; israelle, 366.
 Isscheweden, eschewed, 166.
 Jubilees, 181, 513.
 Juda, Christ belonged to the tribe
 of, 391.
 Judas, 26, 63, 65, 135, 167, 183,
 267, 378.
 Iude, St., 306.
 Iude, Judæa, 27.
 Iudycialis, judicial laws, 285.
 Iuelis, jewels, 63, 86, 195, 216.
 Iuge, judge, 32.
 Iurdiccion, jurisdiction, 57.
 Juries bribed, 63, 183, 513 ;
 packed, 182.
 Jurisdiction, criminal, exercised
 by ecclesiastics, 385, 528.
 Jurisdiction of prelates protects
 vice, 213.
 Iurrouris, jurors, 63, 183.
 Iustis, jousts, 10.
 Kacche, catch, 205.
 Kaste, devise, intend, 87.

- Katerine, Katherine (St.), 205.
 Kechenes, kitchens, extravagant in monasteries, 15, 494.
 Kechene clerkis, 13, 65, 168, 242, 246.
 Keyȝes, keys, power of, 341.
 Kepyng, care, 21.
 Kempt, combed, 426.
 Keruyng, cutting, 12.
 Kest, *perf.* east, kestiden, 443.
 Keuercheris, kerchiefs, head-dresses, 65, 205; kēuerchiefs, 246.
 Keuerid, covered, 20.
 Kyn, kind, sort (many kyn skillis=reasons of many sorts), 352; kynne, 160.
 Kynde nature, 4, 100; race, 7.
 Kyndely, natural, 174, 372.
 Kyndles, broods, 2; kyndlyngis, 315.
 Kynghod, kingship, 471.
 King's Hall, Cambridge, 508, 528.
 Kynrede, tribe, 230, 304.
 Kirtlis, tunics, 40.
 Knackeris, tricksters, 156.
 Knackis, tricks, 156.
 Knackynge, tricky, artificial music, 9, 76, 91, 118, 169.
 Knighton, xlvi, 254.
 Knyȝtte, land held by knight service, 384.
 Knytting, binding, 476.
 Knoweleche, acknowledge, 256; knowlechiȝ, 21; knowlechyng, 327.
 Koynte, cunning, quaint, 347.
 Kon, can, 320; kunne, 105; koude, 471; kouȝde, 382.
 Kotis, coats, 287.
 Kunnen, know, 81.
 Kunnyng, learned, 5.
 Kunnyng, knowledge, 10, 23, 58.
 Label, a tassel, Halliwell. Chaucer uses the word for a pointer attached to the astrolabe. In the text it means a condition under which a bull is granted. The idea seems to be that of a slip attached to the bull and bearing the conditions, 331.
 Labourers, defrauded and oppressed, 233, 519; robbed by prelates, 73.
 Lackid, used impersonally (him lackid), 93.
 Ladies, entertained at monasteries, 129; keep confessors, 334; help on bad priests, 246.
 Lafully, lawfully, 74.
 Laity, should read the gospel, 159, 429.
 Lay rulers, should correct the clergy, 80, 130, 241, 292.
 Lancaster, Duke of. *See* Gaunt, John of.
 Languyschyng, sick, 228.
 Largen, are liberal, 341.
 Largenesse, liberality, 174.
 Lasse, less, 31.
 Laten, late, let, 14, 38.
 Laudis, a service appointed to be said at 3 A.M. It is usually joined with Mattius, and the two make up the first of the Canonical Hours, 41.
 Law, Wyclif's knowledge of, iii.
 Law studied instead of Theology, 157, 511.
 Lawere, lawyer, 299; lawereris, 23.
 Lawyers, harm done by, 182, et seqq., 234, 237; ecclesiastical, the worst, 184.
 Lazar, Lazarus, 344, 526.
 Lead, gold given for, 23, 66, 245.
 Leccherours, fornicators, 102; lechouris, 169.
 Lechery, prelates reserve punishment of, to themselves, 213.
 Leffel, lawful, 41; leful, 67; leful, 90; leeful, 284; *adv.* lefully, 265; leffly, 132.
 Lege, liege, 31.

- Leggeaunce, allegiance, 290.
 Leggen, allege, 289.
 Leie, tell lies, 264; leiþ, 270; leiþede, 264.
 Leie, *v.* lay, 247; leyne, 286; leid, 50.
 Leyen, *part.* lain, 286.
 Leyþe, laugh, 460.
 Leiser, leisure, 112.
 Lekerous, savoury, tempting to gluttony, 216.
 Leland, i.
 Lemes, limbs, members, 323.
 Lemmanys, concubines, 156; bi-shops have several, 73.
 Lene, lend, 128.
 Lengest, longest, 18.
 Lepers, priest's office in regard to, 343.
 Lepre, leper, leprosy, 67.
 Lerid, learned, 243.
 Lesen, lese, lose, 18, 30; lesynge, 18.
 Lesewis, pastures, 433.
 Lesyngis, lies, 3.
 Lesyng mongeris, liars, 11, 125, 268.
 Letten, hinder, 3; lettþ, 48; lettid, 56; letting, 101.
 Lettede, ceased, refrained, 313; lettynge, ceasing, 190.
 Lettris of fraternity, 4, 5, 12, 19, 27, 160, 262, 353, 489.
 Leue! an exclamation equivalent to the modern dear! probably short for "Leue God!" 454 l. 11, 479 l. 5.
 Leue, gladly, willingly, 333.
 Leuen, live, 92; leueþ, 183; leuynge, 33.
 Leuen, leave off, neglect, 53, 70; leueþ, 102.
 Leuefulliche, lawfully, 297.
 Leuy (tribe of), 230, 365.
 Lewid, lay, unlearned, 26, 77, 238.
 Lewiderste, most ignorant, 409.
 Lewidly, ignorantly, 289.
 Lewis of Bavaria, xxxiii.
 Lichy, like, 414.
 Lickenesse, likeness, 19, 96; comparison, 319; lienesse, 304.
 Licned, likened, 97.
 Liþe, tell lies, 333; liþeþ, 36.
 Lien on, slander, 120.
 Liflode, livelihood, 11, 18; lijf-lode, 364; lyfelode, 386.
 Lige, liege, 16, 62.
 Liþtly, easily, 481.
 Liynge, laughing, 213, 517.
 Likerousnesse, daintiness, 61.
 Likþ (used impersonally), hem likþ, 72, 91, 256.
 Lykyng, pleasing, 14, 162.
 Likyngis, delights, 34.
 Lymytacion, restraint, 70.
 Lymytiþ, appoints, gives a monopoly to, 331.
 Lymytours, friars to whom was assigned a district within which they were the official beggars of the Convent, 5.
 Lymys, limbs, 109.
 Lyncolne (Grossetête), 4, 11, 56, 92, 112; lyncolnyense, 385.
 Lynynge, lending, 277.
 Liste, *impers.* please, hem liste, 12.
 Lystris, 298. Teachers or lecturers on Theology in a monastery or capitular church. (I give this with doubt, as the best among the many meanings of "lector." See Mr. Skeat's Note to Piers Plowman, p. 112.)
 Litergi, lethargy, 372.
 Litigiousness of prelates, 61, 87, 436.
 Lytliche, easily, 296.
 Lyue, leave, 40.
 Lywynge, living, mode of life, 124.
 Lok, lock, 330.
 Loke, look, take care, 38; see 95, 97.

- Londis lawe, common law, 132.
 Longip, belongs, 69.
 Lonynge, lending (or begging?), 167; *see* note, p. 512.
 Loos, loss, 16, 212.
 Lordeschippinge, exercise of lordship, 385.
 Lordlynes, lordliness, 384.
 Lords, duty of, to their subjects, 230, 239; impoverished by endowment, 97, 285, 369; imprisoned for helping true priests, 79.
 Lordship. *See* Dominion.
 Lorel, rascal, 191, 212, 214.
 Lorelschipe, rascality, 156.
 Lore, doctrine, 350; loris, 38, 303.
 Losinga, Herbert, 503.
 Loue, praise, 320, line 4. Cf. Dutch *loven*. I believe the word is not used in this sense in the W. V.
 Louedaies, courts of arbitration, 172, 234, 242, 243, 512.
 Louse, loose, let go, 310; lousip, 310; loused; 328.
 Loute, bow down to, 423, 460; loutid, 306.
 Lucifer, 2, 3, 15, 24.
 Luk, St., 146.
 Lumpis, bodies, societies, 6, 447, 449, 491.
 Lustly, pleasant, 411.
 Luther, xx, xlvi.

 Maad, made, 2.
 Macamethe, Mahomet, 301.
 Machabees, 468.
 Magdaleyne, 189, 205.
 Magnyficat, 169, 512.
 Magrey, unpleasantness, misfortune, 465.
 Mahometans, their likness to the religious orders, 301, 523.
 Mahound, Mahomet, 99.
 Maydynhot, maidenhood, 474.

 Maires, mayors, use their influence on behalf of false preachers, 26.
 Maistir of stories (Petrus Comestor), 2, 489.
 Maistris, masters (at the university), 6.
 Maistry, mastery, lordship, 421.
 Malachie, 363.
 Malcus, Malchus, 382.
 Malencolious, gloomy, ill-tempered, 215.
 Maliss, power for harm, ill effect, 457.
 Malle, mallet, 351.
 Manas, menace, 94, 99; manass, 417.
 Manas, *v.* threaten, 63, 234; manaaside, 461; manasyng, 37.
 Manere for þe, for fashion's sake, 156.
 Manhede, manhood, 167.
 Manly, courteous, 65, 74.
 Manquelleris, murderers, 10.
 Manquellyng, homicide, 9.
 Mansleeris, murderers, 56.
 Marc (St.), 313.
 Marchaundise, merchandize, 63.
 Marchauntis, merchants, 22, 24; machauntis, 172.
 Margare, Margaret (St.), 205.
 Marie, the Virgin, 21, 204.
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 Marrid, marred, 329.
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 Marteris of glotony, 211.
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- Masse pens, money paid for masses, 160.
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 Maummetis, idols, 5, 67.
 Maundement, commandment, 7, 149.
 Measures, false, 25, 185, 199.
 Meche, much, 82, 296.
 Meddle, mix, 442; medlen, 297; meddlid, 456.
 Medes, meadows, 10.
 Mede, reward, 247.
 Medeful, meritorious, 8, 83, 178; medefulli, *adv.* 382.
 Meyne, household, followers, 32, 81; meynne, 102; meynze, 365.
 Meynteneris, supporters, 24.
 Meke, *v.* humble, used reflectively, meke him = humble himself, 338.
 Mekerste, most humble, 460.
 Mekenesse, humility, 4.
 Mendynauntis, mendicants, 128, 220.
 Mene, *sub.* mean, midway, 140.
 Mene, mediator, 409.
 Mene, middle, 271; menene, 278.
 Menely, moderately, 31.
 Menours, minors, 40.
 Mentile, mantle, 475.
 Merchants, their tricks, 25, 185, 238.
 Mercymentis, amercements, 118, 233.
 Meriȝt, merit, 48.
 Meritorie, meritorious, 264.
 Merken, remark, 387.
 Meschef, mischief, 91.
 Mesel, leper, 205, 343, 377.
 Messenger, messenger, 58.
 Messis, masses, 212.
 Measurably, moderately, 433.
 Metenes, mattins, 22.
 Meuen, move, 245.
 Mychel, much, 15; mychil, 83.
 Midnight rising of Religious, 133, 317.
 Myȝttis, powers, 217.
 Mynleston of assis, millstone of a mill worked by an ass, 61, 499.
 Mynging, mixing, 475.
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 Myschef, misfortune, discomfort, 14; myschif, 16; myscheues, 49; myscheyf, 231.
 Myschefous, miserable, 14.
 Mysese, discomfort, 380.
 Myslyuyng, evil life, 4.
 Misse-likip, displeases, 338.
 Myspeken, speak ill, 228.
 Myssaid, reviled, 353.
 Missetaken, taken wrongfully, 344.
 Myster, need, 409.
 Mystiliche, mystically, 309; mystely, 343.
 Mysty, mystical, 344.
 Mytris, mitres (jewelled), 210.
 Moche, much, 3; mochel, 83.
 Moebelis, moveable goods, 445.
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 Moldwarpis, moles, 89, 95, 147, 502.
 Mone, money, 331.
 Mone, moon, 192, 267.
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- Moneþ, month, 69.
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 Moo, more, 8.
 Moote hallis, legal assemblies, 395.
 Moralis, moral laws, 285.
 Mornynge, mourning, 91.
 Mornynge abite, garb of penitence, 4.
 Mortal, what sin is, xxxvi, 338.
 Mortesid, amortised, 123.
 Morþere, murder, 11.
 Morþerid, murdered, 100.
 Mortuaries, fines due from property on the death of the owner, 224, 518.
 Morwe, morrow, 204.
 Moste, greatest, 174.
 Mot, must, 50; moten, 57.
 Motetis, a sort of Church music, 90. *See* note, 502.
 Mount, so called from moving, 457.
 Mowen, might, 69; mowne, 26.
 Mowlid, made mouldy, 153.
 Muk, muck, 5, 147. A favourite expression of Wyclif for riches.
 Musen, consider, wonder, 35.
 Mut, must, 285.

 Naaman, 67, 377.
 Nakid, mere, 35.
 Name, reputation, distinction, 2.
 Namely, especially, 9, 20, 279; nameliche, 16.
 Nappiþ, sleeps, 303.
 Naprye, table linen, 434.
 Ne, nor, 3.
 Neden, compel, 57; nedid, 11, 41.
 Nedy (should probably be nedys), needs, 49.
 Nedles, needlessly, 51.

 Neer, nearer, 252, 289, 409.
 Neet, cattle, 172.
 Neieþboris, neighbours, 35; neiþeboþeris, 73.
 Neynþe, ninth, 12.
 Nemne, *v.* name, nemyn, 465; nempnyd, 394.
 Nerehonde, almost, 243.
 Neþeles, nevertheless, 40.
 Nevill, Lord, impeached, 519.
 Nycete, trifling, 167, 205.
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 Nicodemus, gospel of, 256.
 Nye, nigh, 389.
 Nyþe, high (the *n* carried on from end of the previous word), 336.
 Nigromansye, necromancy, 429.
 Nyle, do not (ne wille used as Lat. *noli*), 21.
 Nys, is not, 50, 78, 89, 149 (in all these cases used with another negative "nys not").
 Nyse, dainty, fanciful, trifling, 23, 152.
 Noble, a gold coin worth six shillings and eightpence, 183, 514.
 Nobleie, nobleness, 152, 194; nobeleie, 204; nobley, 440.
 Noblemen, keep up bands of ruffians, 243.
 Noyeþ, hurts, 307.
 Noyose, hurtful, 315.
 Noon, None, the fifth of the Canonical hours, 41.
 Noon, none, not one, 19, 23.
 Norischen, to nourish, support, encourage, 6, 24; norscheþ, 42.
 Norisses, nurses, 182.
 Norwich, bishop of, 152, 502.
 Not, nought, 216.
 Not, knows not (ne wit), 333.
 Notaries, used to take down false witness against preachers, 74.
 Noteful, needful, 343.

- Nottis, nuts, given as presents by friars, 12.
 Novelries, novelties, 50; nowelries, 94.
 Nowarde to hem, they do not care, 24.
 Nurschid, nourished, 421.
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 Of, by, 78, 89.
 Of hard, hardly, 297.
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 Omnis utriusque sexus, The bull, 329, 524.
 On, one, 21; oone, 50; oon, 293.
 Onched, unity, 429.
 Onest, honourable, 411.
 Onys, once, 6; oonys, 372.
 Onoon, anon, 102.
 Onsuerede, answered, 299.
 Oonliche, only, 310.
 Oost, host, 63, 291.
 Ope, hope, 65, 159.
 Opyn, public, well known, 287.
 Opyn, openly, publicly, 34.
 Or, ere, before, 166.
 Ora pro nobis, sung in procession through the streets, 133, 176.
 Orble, horrible, 233.
 Ordeynen, appoint, 5; ordend, 388.
 Ordeynyngis, ordinances, 57.
 Orders, jealousies between, 310, 523.
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 Orgene, organs, 77; orgen 91; orgon, 191.
 Orible, horrible, 59, 130.
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 Ose, Hosea, 383.
 Oste, host, 345.
 Osteleris, innkeepers, 181.
 Ostia, Cardinal of, 47, 498.
 Oper, either, 78.
 Ouer, besides, 460.
 Ouermost, uppermost, 340.
 Ournementis, ornaments, 393.
 Outlawid, driven out, 116.
 Outtake, except, 54; outakiþ, 130.
 Outwittis, senses, 291.
 Owen, own, 3.
 Owen, ought, 20; owiþ, 11.
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 Pagyn, pageant, 206. With the secondary sense of an acted trick, 99. *See* note on p. 515.
 "In the word pageant the final *t* is unoriginal, as in ancient and tyrant; the derivation is from the Low Latin *pagina*, fully vouched for by the notes in the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, meaning a scaffold for the acting of miracle plays."—From a notice of some remarks made by Prof. Skeat at the Cambridge Philological Society, *Academy*, Dec. 27, 1879.
 Payed of, satisfied with, 432.
 Paynymes, pagans, 29, 184.
 Paleis, palaces, 14, 129; paleicis, 221; paleises, 14.
 Pans, pence, 36.
 Panter, snare, 80, 193, 205.
 Parceyued, perceived, 10.
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 Parsones, parish priests, 76.
 Parte, divide, share, 14; partid, 316.
 Partynge, distribution, 134, 175.
 Partyneris, sharers, 81.
 Passen, exceed, surpass, 66, 88.
 Passyngly, exceedingly, 342.
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 Pecoock, Bishop, 385.
 Pedderis, pedlars, 12.
 Pees, peace, 18.
 Peiere, make worse, injure, 181, 194, 250; peyrynge, 365; peirid, paired, 102; perid, 32; peierid, 188.
 Peyne, pain, penalty, 24, 56; peyny, 339.
 Peyned, punished, 11.
 Peyneful, laborious, 124.
 Peynted, false, hypocritical, 271.
 Peisble, peaceable, 41.
 Pellure, fur, 12, 92, 148; pelure, 121; peluris, 127.
 Penance, false, 25, 160; arbitrary, 333; danger of money penance, 334.
 Pencions, annual payments out of the tithe or endowment, 97, 503.
 Peny, penny, þe peny, used for money generally, 67.
 Peny clerkis, account keepers, 78, 246.
 Pens, pence, 69.
 Percy, Lord Henry, x.
 Pere, peer, equal, 47; peris, 183.
 Peris, pears, 12.
 Perfit, perfect, 2; perfitere, 269; perfiteste, 157.
 Perfitly, perfectly, 3.
 Perilousere, more perilous, 31.
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 Pyned, punished, 213.
 Pipe wiþ an yuy lefe, 372.
 Pistles, epistles, 101; pistlis, 157.
 Pite, pity, 129.
 Pitee, piety, 228, 304.
 Placebo, vespers in the office for the dead, 57, 177, 191, 494; placeboes, 15.
 Placis, mansions; 14. *See* Mr. Skeat's note on Piers Plowman, xiii, 246.
 Plate, extravagance in, 60, 92, 279, 434.
 Plede, go to law, 24, 66.
 Pledynge, litigation, 93, 122; pletynge, 123, 373.
 Plee, lawsuit, litigation, 60, 61, 116, 123, 146.
 Pleien, play, 99.
 Pleies, amusements, 6, 23, 152; pley, mystery play (of York), 429.
 Pleyneþ, complains, 38, 234; *refl.* plene hem, 388.
 Pleynt, complaint, 308.
 Plenerly, fully, 50, 104, 126.
 Plentifousli, plentifully, 3; plenteuously, 68.
 Plesance, pleasure, 369.
 Plesandeli, pleasingly, 3; plesaunly, 288.
 Plesaunt, pleasing, 16.
 Pluralities sometimes allowable, 432.
 Poeuere, poor, 195.
 Poynt devyse at, exact, complete, 329.
 Poyntis, (?) appointments, 250.
 Poisies, poems (preached), 124.
 Polychronicon, 391.
 Pond, pounds, 82; pondis, 100.
 Ponderen, consider (?), it seems rather to bear the meaning of pretend, 486.
 Ponysche, 35, 67.
 Pontificals, books containing prayers and ritual directions for Bishops, especially those needed in exercising the offices reserved to the Episcopal order, 480.
 Poondis, inclosures, 421.
 Popes. *See* Urban V., Urban VI., Gregory XI., Clement VII.
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 Poralis, poor people, 14.
 Porerste, poorest, 460.
 Porfirie, 447, 533.
 Portos, portable breviaries (port-hors); Lat. *portiforium*: "liber quem portat foras sacerdos."—*Int.* to Sarum Breviary.
 Possessioners, endowed clergy, 11, 116, et seqq., 506.
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 Postlis, apostles, 55, 462.
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 Pouert, poverty, 5.
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- Preie, pray, 77; preied, 14; preiynge, 6.
- Preire, prayer, 42.
- Preisen, praise, 70; preisyng, 66.
- Prelates appointed by simony, 64; their vices, 73; their extravagance, 88; they are dumb dogs, 104; too fat to preach, 445.
- Prelates, jurisdiction of, 35, 213, 496, 517.
- Prentis, apprentices, 11, 185, 238.
- Presents given to men of influence, 129, 508.
- Presonen, imprison, 211.
- Presthold, priesthood, 78; prestod, 58, 88.
- Preue, privy, 17, 104; preuei, 5.
- Preuely, secretly, 89.
- Preuyte, secrets, 10; preuytes, 46.
- Prickid, choked with thorns, 443.
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- Priests, poor, institution of, xvi; charged with causing disturbance, 27, 29, 138, 229, 264.
- Prikyng, riding fast, hastening, 24.
- Prime, one of the Canonical Hours due at 6 A.M., 41.
- Principalite, rule, 327.
- Prynte, impress, 473.
- Pris, price, 21, 70.
- Prisone, imprison, 79; prisoned, 79.
- Privileges exempting from residence, 424.
- Priueetes, book of, Apocalypse, 309.
- Priuyng, depriving, 267.
- Processe, continuance, 64; argument, statement, 367.
- Procurasies, procuration fees, sums payable to bishops or archdeacons at visitations, 92, 249, 456.
- Procuratours, proctors, agents, 9, 60, 70, 91, 139; proctours, 279.
- Proff, proof, 70.
- Profitere, more profitable (?) (most likely a mistake of the scribe for *perfitere*), 269.
- Profren, proffer, 18.
- Propre, property, 40, 478; have in propre = possess as one's own, 461.
- Propre, own, private, 49.
- Proprely, as private property, 49.
- Proprete, ownership, 49.
- Proprid, appropriated, 49, 317, 353.
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- Prouendris, prebends, 419.
- Proues, proofs, 290.
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- Charite schuld bigyne at hemself, 78.
- Give a goose and charge for the garlic, 82.
- þe fox feyneþ hym dede til briddis comen to his tounge, 123.
- Beren þe baner, 130.
- He þat handliþ pich schal be foulid þerof, 218.

- Wiþ hook or wiþ crok, 250.
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 Yuel frute witnessiþ yuel rote, 331.
 Go pipe wiþ an yuy lefe, 372.
 Gabriel schal blow his horne, 382.
 At racke and at manger, 435.
 Fish out of water, 449.
 Prouyncials(mynystri), officials of the Franciscan order, 40.
 Pseudo, pretender, hypocrite, 296, 308, 479.
 Pupplische, publish, 290.
 Purchasen, acquire, 131.
 Purgatory, 201.
 Purgatory, Pope ought to empty, 81, 501.
 Pursuen, persecute, 5, 35, 44, 87; pursuyng, 22, 24, 87.
 Pursueris, persecutors, 138.
 Pursuyt, persecution, 5, 44.
 Purtenance, belongings, 370.
 Purvey, John, 141, 510.
 Purviance, provision, 387.
 Putrie, whoredom, 10.
 Putten on, charge with, slander, 19.

 Queer, choir, 192, 319.
 Queynte, cunning, 212; queyntely, cunningly, 144, 477.
 Queyntise, cunning, 20; queyntises, tricks, 218.
 Quekenyd, quickened, made alive, 131.
 Quellyng, killing, 77.
 Queste, legal inquiry, 182, 278, 290.
 Qwestyons, book of (Augustine's), quoted, 362, 375.
 Quyenals, masses said for the dead during five years, 66.
 Quik, living, 246; quyke, 96; quic, 477.
 Quiken, make alive, 319, 452.
 Quiten, repay, requite, 173, 215.

 Raymeþ, robs, 185. *See* Mr. Skeat's Notes to Piers Pl., p. 275.
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 Ratellen, chatter, 274.
 Raunge—seyn a more raunge= speak at greater length, 332.
 Raunsonyd, ransomed, 66.
 Realte, royalty, high state, 14.
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 Rebelte, rebellion, 31, 75, 86, 109, 229.
 Recerven, reserve, 98.
 Rechelesnes, carelessness, 392.
 Recke, *v.* care, 44, 151; reckiþ, 143.
 Redi, ready, 24.
 Reeaumus, realms, 305.
 Refreynen, restrain, 207; refreyned, 278.
 Regalie, kingly rights, 130, 279, 280, 292.
 Regnen, reign, 68; regnede, 481.
 Reisen, raise, 185.
 Rekennynge, reckoning, 33.
 Relekis, relics, false, 154.
 Releue, lift up, raise, 58.
 Religion, monastic profession, 7.
 Religious, regular priests, monks, friars, etc., 2.
 Renewelid, renewed, 314.
 Rennen, run, 22, 30; renneþ, 100; rennyng, 31.
 Renneris, runners, 23.
 Rennue, increase, profit, 320.
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 Represente, present, 47.
 Repreuen, reprove, 9; convince, 30.
 Reprof, disgrace, 23.
 Reproof often a duty, 55, 292, 296, 313; should be welcomed, 293.
 Resceyuen, receive, 97; resseyued-en, 469; ressayuyng, 377.

- Reste, quiet, 132 ; leisure, 172.
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 Reuen, rob, 15, 291.
 Reuers, plunderers, 243.
 Reuersip, for resists, 286, 522.
 Reues, bailiffs, 195.
 Reule, *v.* rule, 23.
 Reulis, rules, 7, 120 ; rewel, 300.
 Reward, regard, 21, 36, 96.
 Rewleliche, regularly, 317.
 Rewme, realm, 23.
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 Riching, enriching, 445.
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 Riȝtwisnesse, righteousness, 29.
 Rikene, reckon, 425.
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 Saad, steadfast, 21 ; sadde, 79.
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 Scarsly, sparingly, 300.
 Scarste, scarcity, 364.
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 Schaak, shake, 291.
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 Schapen, made, 352.
 Scharpliest, most sharply, 67.
 Schaueldours, idle wanderers, vagabonds, 249.
 Scheld, shield, 261, 347; schildis, 155.
 Schepe, sheep, 32; schep, 172.
 Schepeherde, shepherd, 238; schip-ard, 374.
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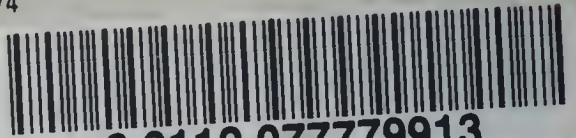


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